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VICO'S CULTURAL HISTORY

*The Production and Transmission of Ideas in Naples
1685-1750*

BY

HAROLD SAMUEL STONE



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To my parents Everett and Ellen Stone
and my three sisters Miki Noltimier,
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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	xi
Introduction	xiii
 1. <i>Printing and Reading in Naples in the Late 1680s</i>	1
The Visit of Mabillon and Burnet	1
How Naples' Intellectual Community Reacted to the 1688 Earthquake	8
Neapolitan Printing of the Late 1680s	12
The Emblematic Careers of Niccolo Giannetasio and Francesco Solimena	20
 2. <i>The Index and the Atomists</i>	24
The Inquisitorial Investigation of the Atomists	28
A Legal Debate in Manuscript	34
 3. <i>The War Between the Ancients and the Moderns:</i> <i>The Neapolitan Front</i>	46
The Moderns Counter-attack in Manuscript	54
The Moderns Counter-attack in Print	64
 4. <i>New Publications in the 1690s: Travel Literature and</i> <i>Celebratory Verse</i>	72
Celebratory Verse Representing Baroque Heroism	83
The Arrival of Medina Coeli	89
 5. <i>The Academy Founded by Medina Coeli</i>	93
 6. <i>The End of Spanish Hapsburg Rule in Naples</i>	110
The Conspiracy against Medina Coeli	113
Printed and Manuscript Accounts of the Conspiracy ..	116
The New Bourbon Regime	117
Philip and the Investiture	122
New Books and Make-Believe Academies	123

7. <i>The Austrian Invasion of Naples of 1707</i>	132
The Neapolitan Transition from Bourbon to Hapsburg	134
The Austrian Invasion	137
The Consequences of the Conquest: The Cardinal and the Cyclops	139
The Controversy Concerning Ecclesiastical Revenues ...	144
Politicizing the Arts?	152
8. <i>An Italian Perspective on Neapolitan Publishing and Thinking</i>	156
The Ethic of Theological Controversy	160
Vico's <i>De nostri temporis</i>	166
Doria's <i>La vita civile</i> (The Public Sphere)	168
More Morality: The Exemplary Death of Shaftesbury in Naples	174
9. <i>Vico's First Published Scholarly Works and his Friendship with Doria</i>	180
An Excursus on Making and Knowing	180
<i>De antiquissima</i> in Context	184
Vico's anti-Cartesianism	186
Making and Knowing for Vico and Doria	189
Doria and the Controversy with Porzio	192
10. <i>Printing for the Different Reading Publics in Naples</i>	196
Gravina's Reform of Poetry and of Law	200
Giannone and the Issue of Neapolitan Reform	207
Naples' Ongoing Encounter with Descartes	214
Grimaldi attempts to Republish his Benedetti Work ...	216
Doria's Flight from Descartes	218
The Christian Lucretius and the Pagan One	221
Popular History and Almanacs	223
Time of Troubles	227
11. <i>The New Style of Vinci and the New Science of Vico</i>	230
Vico's <i>Scienza nuova</i> and the System of Patronage in Naples	237
Vico's Science	242
Science and Orthodoxy	243
Vico's Method	248

Natural Right and Natural Rights	249
The Relation of <i>Scienza nuova</i> to Social Reform	257
Vico's Associates	258
12. <i>Booksellers and Readers: Newtonians and the History of Religion</i>	267
A Neapolitan Bookshop in 1734	267
How Authors Respond to Critics	273
Publishing Autobiographies and Poetry	276
New Books in Naples	278
The Second Edition of <i>Scienza nuova</i>	280
Imaginative Universals and an Excursus on Agnellus da Ravenna	283
Giannone's <i>Il triregno</i> in Relation to Deism	286
Doria's Encounter with the Deists and the Chinese	289
13. <i>Codas and Last Works</i>	292
Pietro Giannone: The Tragic End	293
Grimaldi's Posthumous Work on Witchcraft	299
Vico's Third Edition of <i>Scienza nuova</i>	300
Vico's Encounter with Spinoza	302
Naples' New Homer: The Career of Pergolesi	305
How Doria's Defense of the Ancients Enraged both the Church and the State	307
Conclusion	313
Index of Manuscripts	319
Index of Primary Material	320
Index of Modern Sources	326

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to describe the intellectual context in which Giambattista Vico wrote his *Scienza nuova* (New Science). Vico's mature thought began an original direction in the analysis of culture. His method was based on a new kind of study of human consciousness that attempted to transform the subjective understanding of historical evidence into science. His notions of knowledge, and of myth and language inspired the creativity and imagination of writers as diverse as James Joyce and Benedetto Croce in the first half of this century. Both Joyce and Croce, in different measure were stimulated by Vico's conception of personal, cultural and mythic memories; they accepted his view that human memory is as organic and changing as the rest of our lives, and the notion that memory was an imperfect copy or isolated byte of information missed some of its crucial attributes. Vico's ideas about historical process and the accomplishments of his theoretical methods are now generally recognized, but this has not made it easier to read his major book or understand the context of his arguments. My aim is to describe parts of the environment out of which certain of his major concepts developed. My analysis will include methods adapted from the history of the book and of reading. These are particularly suited for a description of the intellectual communities of Naples during Vico's lifetime.

We all have a working understanding of what it means to read a book, though, as with any complex cultural activity, trying to define it precisely is extremely tricky. A number of models have been developed for this behavior; we talk of ideal readers as well as those having different levels of competence; ideas about reading practices and readerships have been studied in a variety of historical periods. And though we may not agree on the significance to be attributed to printing, one can see why theories on book reading might develop now. Afterall, there are rumors and predictions which claim that the book is going the way of the quill pen. It is clear that more and more information is easily accessible from computer data bases. The book, in this view, will loose its status as the symbol to represent that repository where our culture records and stores significant information and experiences.

The history of the reading public is complicated because readers, for the most part, are not authors; they do not as a matter of course record the ideas that books occasioned or what they learned from them. Only scholars and researchers have been disciplined to leave traces of their reading in footnotes. In reaction to this training, or perhaps the romantic in us, historians have chosen to study moments that resulted in something new. Originality, is thought more in need of documentation than explanations of continuities with the old. Reading was not regarded as a creative activity. We have benefitted from a variety of approaches fashioned to explain the appearance of new attitudes and concepts. The methods of cultural history, particularly those which seek to define the unities that shaped a specific civilization or historical period, and, the methods related to the history of ideas, have given us remarkable insight into specific communities, of academic and artistic disciplines, and of the productions of individual artists and thinkers. But both methods regarded the way culture was communicated as a secondary phenomenon. Transmission was thought to be of marginal concern in contrast to the study of a cultural object, idea, or some other product.

Approaches to reading and readerships have frequently meant a quantitative approach to the history of ideas. The intent of these investigations was to show how cultural ways of representing or imagining were embedded in the social facts or structure of a specific society. The goal was to determine what people read, not what an elite wrote. Studies of rates of literacy, patterns in book ownership, and the actual topics and genre of these printed books have been summed so that we can discern the social significance of reading. Frequently the aim was to differentiate readers in terms of social class. While the work of the cultural historians of civilizations and of ideas might look toward abstract philosophic issues, the social approach gravitated to the study of popular culture. Some intellectual historians criticized the social history of ideas for not giving sufficient attention to what was actually contained in a book. Such methods, it was charged, naively presumed that ownership was tantamount to reading, and that political action had an unproblematic relation to ideas.¹ The controversies between these approaches have resulted in useful clarifications of principles and issues. There has been a fruitful

¹ This is more a polemical position than an assessment of scholarship; consider the nuanced account based on quantitative data in Annik Pardailhé-Galabrun, *The*

combination of the study of reading practices, the analysis of publishing conventions, and the ways books convey systems of representations, symbols, networks of meaning and partial visions of imagined totalities in recent research of early modern European history.² The methods of cultural transmission do not deal in sweeping conclusions, but they can yield descriptions of the constraints and opportunities available to an author. This approach puts its emphasis on the interchange between author and reader.

I have found these methods to be particularly useful in investigating the intellectual communities of late seventeenth and early eighteenth century Naples because printing was central to its cultural life. Autobiographies of the time were a mixture of the annotated bibliography and the indignant letter to the editor. Giambattista Vico, the most illustrious of Naples' scholars, and a pioneer in the field of cultural studies, is a case in point. His autobiography, indeed most of his published works, are notorious for their inaccuracies and imprecision, but he is remarkably exact on matters of bibliographical description. He may make an error about his birth date, but when he tells us a book was a duodecimo we can trust him. Vico's life was shaped by books and the book trade. Major conversations took place in bookstores and he even received a job offer in one. His autobiography included lengthy descriptions of the troubles involved in getting the first two editions of *Scienza nuova* to press, as well as his exchanges with reviewers, patrons and readers. Vico's summaries of the contents of his books imitate the style of the scholarly journals of his day and can be read as his ideal review of his works. He concluded his autobiography by describing his attitudes to reviewers, asserting he enjoyed going to his desk to write "refined acts of vengeance against his detractors".³ He mentioned details of a book's format; he noted, for example, that his biography of the military leader

birth of intimacy: privacy and domestic life in early modern Paris, trans. Jocelyn Phelps (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), chapter 7, 174–212.

² I have adapted approaches suggested by the essays in Roger Chartier, *Cultural history: Between practices and representations*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988); and, the introduction of Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: a study in the history of classical scholarship. I. Textual criticism and exegesis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), and, his "Introduction" in *The Transmission of culture in early modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990). This analysis of Vico's Naples uses the publishing history of one city area as its primary source.

³ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, ed. Paolo Cristofolini (Firenze: Sansoni, 1971), Autobiography, p. 54.

and war hero Antonio Caraffa was the first book printed in Naples that used what he called the Dutch style of book design and layout of the title page.⁴ Furthermore, Vico was anything but a passive reader; his transformations of what he read can be surprising and even arbitrary. This has led some contemporary scholars to the conclusion that Vico read nothing at all. But what for one is sloppy scholarship is cultural fact for another. Carlo Ginzburg has shown the advantages of taking seriously the misreadings of a miller of Friuli.

Naples, during this period, offers a number of advantages for the study of the printing trade and other forms of cultural production. There was a substantial printing establishment in the city; this is not surprising given that the only European cities greater in population were Istanbul, London, and Paris. But, in terms of the number of books produced, it was not nearly as complex an industry as that of London, Amsterdam, Paris, Rome or Venice. In these cities the book trade required its own journal to keep readers abreast of the new items that were available. Naples had a newspaper but did not require a book review journal to sort out the printed material. These other cities had long standing connections with foreign printers; and their booksellers had ready access to materials that only made their way to Naples with difficulty. Neapolitans interested in acquiring such foreign books had to make a special effort to obtain them, and these efforts, in some cases, are preserved in their correspondence. The quantity of printed material available in Naples at this time, while large, does not require that it be studied only quantitatively.

Book publication, it should be remembered, was not only a relationship between a reader and an author. Except for popular works like almanacs and broadsides, a patron was required to defray the printing costs—the major expense was the cost of paper; an artist and an engraver might be hired to prepare a frontispiece; and, unless the publication was an illegal one, there would be letters of approval from sacred and secular readers. Printers, publishers, booksellers produced, sold and distributed books locally and sent them to colleagues abroad. The printing of a book would generally involve bringing together people of different social status and intellectual training. These individuals had different expectations as to how they should be rewarded for their services. A somewhat different group would be involved in the preparation and circulation of manuscripts.

⁴ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, Autobiography, p. 28.

They were all involved, at least temporarily, in cultural production; Raymond Williams' analysis of Marx's idea of the "class fraction" can describe the group associated with a particular publication and serve as a more general term for the fluid membership related to book publication.⁵

One consequence of this is that matters usually relegated to footnotes such as names of publishers and places of publication will be part of the text itself. And, because one of my aims is to describe what books were actually available for reading in Naples, mention will be made not only of new books but also of reprints and new editions. This community of book producers, was so large that most of its participants are unknown, but it was far smaller than the body of general readers in Naples. Part of the aim of this study is to recover the individuals and their contributions to the reading community of early eighteenth century Naples. It was to this local population of readers and cultural consumers that cultural production was directed. Publishing history describes what book dealers believed interested their community of readers and what book buyers sought to learn from authors. A consequence of the methods of publishing in the early modern period was that marketing was not separated from the ideas and thinking in a work.

Part of the argument that I wish to make in this study is that the publishing history of Naples can provide a plausible frame and context for the understanding of aspects of Vico's *Scienza nuova*. In this regard we are much in the debt of Benedetto Croce and Fausto Nicolini for their study of what Vico read. According to Arnaldo Momigliano we are better informed on the books Vico read or knew about than of any other Italian author.⁶ Croce and Nicolini chose to regard Vico as isolated from his community in part because they regarded culture not, primarily, as a network of meanings, but more frequently presented it as a unified principle superior to, and prior to the social and economic values of an age. Vico's intellectual

⁵ Raymond Williams, *The Sociology of Culture* (NY: Schocken, 1982), p. 74. I have also used aspects of the approach suggested by Howard Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) in my description of the work of artists; in respect to Naples' musical community I have used methods found in *Music and society: the politics of composition, performance and reception*, ed. by Richard Leppert and Susan McClary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁶ Arnaldo Momigliano, *Essays on historiography* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1977), p. 258.

accomplishments, as they saw it, were genuine, but did not touch the core of Neapolitan life. Because Vico's insight did not dominate his age, his cultural community was punished and placed in the shade of his genius. Croce had his own motives for wanting to think of Vico's ideas as out of step with his times. The belief that individuals and their works can represent an age can be a useful organizing principle. A plausible picture of fifteenth century Florence as a unified cultural world might be composed by the cultural historian; but, the heterogeneity of baroque Naples with its population that some thought approached a million, could not be represented as an homogeneous, organic, cultural unity.

Croce thought that Vico's philosophic isolation was as it should be, for he saw him as a solitary prophet in the desert of eighteenth century rationalism proclaiming the way to romanticism and the historical consciousness of the nineteenth century. More recently others have attempted to find an intellectual context for him. The most well known among English readers is Isaiah Berlin's 1976 *Vico & Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas*.⁷ Berlin developed his argument based on what he believed to be Vico's fundamental philosophic insight; Vico had found a new kind of knowledge different than that of the natural sciences which was unique to cultural studies and the human sciences. Berlin identified Vico as a cultural pluralist who opposed the typical trends of enlightenment thinking. To this Berlin appended the hypothesis that Vico's ideas had an origin in the accomplishments of the French jurists of the sixteenth century. These scholars of the French legal renaissance, he argued, could be seen as significant predecessors of Vico's thought. This suggestion, leaving aside the issue that the jurists' research goals were in fundamental opposition to Vico's, does not acknowledge that these authors were well known in Naples and their ideas accepted by leading members of the legal profession. The insights Berlin attributes to them were not the special property of Vico's reading, but were known and widely discussed. These jurists directly influenced the work of Vico's contemporaries, Pietro Giannone and Gian Vincenzo Gravina; Vico, on the other hand, typically acknowledges their ideas only to dismiss them. If Croce defined Vico's contribution so precisely

⁷ My intent here is not to review the voluminous literature on this topic but to clarify my approach. Current bibliographies of works on Vico have been published under the auspices of the *Bollettino del centro di studi vichiani* and *New Vico Studies*.

so as not to be related to eighteenth century Naples or the eighteenth century at all, Berlin's suggestion of the French jurists is too general a context to describe what was distinctive in Vico's thought.

Berlin's hypothesis, however, has the merit of at least attempting to put Vico in an historical tradition. Other critics, apparently frustrated by Vico's avowed indifference to his contemporaries have taken him at his word that he didn't read any new books after about 1700. Some have made the more dubious claim that Vico was a heterodox thinker and a master of the art of both concealing and revealing dangerous truths in his complex text. But none holding these views have attempted to relate Vico to the libertine writings of his time or organizations like the Masons. The consequence is that such views tend to maintain the notion that Vico was an isolated thinker. Curiously enough, even those who portray Vico as an apologist for Catholic belief must confess that even here Vico seems all but cut-off from his intellectual world. But most of Vico's readers ignore all this, stepping lightly through his confused and confusing erudition, taking delight in the fantastic elements of his exuberant prose.

Vico's name is associated with the notion, though he did not originate it, that history proceeds in clearly defined cycles; and his *Scienza nuova* is recognized as a fundamental work in the philosophy of history and of social thought.⁸ He is known for the theory that poetry was the first and the spontaneous language of humanity; he developed as a corollary the hypothesis that the Homeric corpus was not the product of an individual genius but a common story created by the archaic Greeks. All of this has been known for a good while, but it is only in the last twenty-five years or so that Vico's thought has found a sustained and growing following in the Anglo-American scholarly community. Part of this interest in Vico seems related to the emotional significance that his theories give to the desires for disruption and destruction as well as those for reconciliation and regeneration. An examination of an issue of the journal *Vico Studies Today* or collections of essays on Vico edited by Giorgio Tagliacozzo and others, indicates that Vico speaks simultaneously to the Modernist and Romantic aspects of our culture. This growing interest in Vico comes in part from a sympathetic feeling that the problems he

⁸ Donald R. Kelley, *The human measure: social thought in the western legal tradition* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 2, 234–239. Kelley describes the complex intellectual tradition that Vico believed he was perfecting.

wrote about are similar to some of the choices and dilemmas of our own time.

This capacity of Vico's *Scienza nuova* to appear in some ways contemporary, or at least an immediate precursor to, contemporary concerns must rank among the most impressive accomplishments of what is also an extremely dense and difficult book. To be sure the problems on which Vico seemed prescient have varied over time, but that has only added to his reputation. And Vico has also frustrated some of his greatest admirers who seek in his work foreshadowings and anticipations of concepts and ideas that he "must" have had but just couldn't quite express with sufficient clarity. An historical investigation such as this gives priority to the audience Vico addressed and the terms and categories they used, but it would be disingenuous to claim that I ignore the reasons that might justify or promote the reading of Vico's works in our culture.

Today we seem less concerned about Vico as a father of historicism than as an early promoter of semiotics. And, more significantly, his name is generally associated with the origins of the study of culture. Among the most fruitful interpretative discussions of Vico's work have concerned how to define the fundamentals of his approach. One side argues that Vico's essential discovery was of an historical sense or faculty of historical intuition that enables the thinker to understand the independent reality of the human past; another answers that Vico's method allows the analyst to discover culture by revealing the various discourses that constitute culture. It is now almost possible to imagine a history of philosophy textbook that would represent the epistemological choice of modern philosophy by the dichotomy of Descartes and Vico; that is the natural science model versus that of the human sciences. The example of Ernst Troeltsch, though facing a different set of problems in the early 1920s, offers support to this view; he contrasted Vico and Descartes as a representation of what he considered the crisis of the modern age.

Vico's political thinking about the state as an institution may stand alone in its requiring the incorporation of foreigners, aliens who worship different gods, as fundamental to its development. His version of this, however, does not mean that diversity is seen as a positive value by those forced to accept the foreigners. Religious tolerance was a characteristic of the Heroic period of the state; indeed, these same aliens created a rival religion whose values are the opposite, a kind of inversion or anti-theology, to that of the Heroes. These as-

pects of his thought are reasons for its contemporaneity. Another group that has found relevance of Vico's ideas are strands of the ecological and environmental movement that are interested in issues of economic development, and in particular in the application of what are frequently termed appropriate technologies. Vico's ideas and those of other theorists who sought to explain human development by focusing on local traditions and their integration into larger systems have gained a new utility. Instead of the wholesale replacement of an older way of life with industrial capitalism, this method seeks to repeat earlier stages of capitalist development using what is indigenous. How this revival of Vico studies has come about is a fascinating study in itself, but not suited to what is intended as a cultural history of Naples during Vico's adult lifetime.

In contrast to the growing Anglo-American fascination with Vico, it could almost be said of the Italian scene that more interest has been shown in understanding the cultural world of his contemporaries. A number of significant monographs and general histories have been published on their lives and works, and the public institutions of his time. There have been important studies on Pietro Giannone, Antonio Genovesi, Paolo Mattia Doria, Giuseppe Valletta, Luc'Antonio Porzio, Tommaso Cornelio, and Francesco D'Andrea. Part of my purpose will be to summarize this research for English readers. In consequence, my analysis of Vico's books themselves will be subordinated to descriptions of Naples' publishing and intellectual history. In consideration of the length of this argument and the reader's patience, the influence and contribution of Pietro Giannone will not receive a detailed consideration. Much recent research on Naples has been influenced by Franco Venturi's masterful history of the Italian enlightenment in his multivolume *Settecento riformatore* (Eighteenth-Century Reformers). Venturi has made clear the richness of Italy's contribution to the Enlightenment; his investigation begins in the 1730s, a low point in Italian political history. In respect to Naples, his interest was to set the stage for the career of Antonio Genovesi, an economist who has the distinction of being the first to occupy a chair devoted to the study of economics at any European university.

My beginning point will be the late 1680s because these years mark a quickening in Neapolitan intellectual life and, as it happens, the start of Vico's career. I end in the middle years of the eighteenth century when Vico and most of his generation were dead. In political history this chronology straddles the last years of the Spanish

Hapsburgs, includes the French Bourbons and the period of Austrian rule, and concludes with the first decade of the new Spanish Bourbon dynasty. Chapters One through Six concern the last years of the Spanish Viceregency and give special attention to the institutional aspects of publishing and intellectual controversy in Naples. In addition, I describe the forms of peer review and their relation to publication and sales. Manuscript circulation was still an important aspect of intellectual exchange in Naples and I give some examples of how the production and reading of manuscripts interacted with printing and readers of printed books. Some important political and intellectual controversies would take place only or mostly in manuscript. In the first decade of the eighteenth century, manuscript controversy was supplemented by new attitudes towards scholarly debate and publicity. Chapters Seven through Twelve concern the period of Austrian rule; and I give special emphasis to the decade of the 1720s. During this time period book review journals become an important part of intellectual exchange in Naples. I have concentrated on themes directly related to Vico, and given less attention to the work of lawyers and the writings of Pietro Giannone. Chapter twelve examines the contents of a bookshop in Naples, and focuses on the early 1730s. The final chapter concerns the period of the first years of the rule of Carlo III, a Bourbon who made Naples an independent kingdom. While the Bourbons brought change to Naples, the magnitude of their reform was much more limited than that hoped for by many intellectuals. Such limited accomplishment may be bound to disappoint, and reflections on the stolidity of the human scene never satisfy the expectations of idealism. Most of the chapter concerns failed scholarly projects, manuscript collections of unpublished writings, and posthumous publications. This melancholy ending is an appropriate conclusion for a community that created several important new ideas but had only limited possibilities for their realization.

Throughout this investigation mention will be made of developments in the arts and music of this time. Such topics are usually not included in scholarly investigations of Vico's thought, though this is surprising given Vico's reputation for developing a new method and principles for the study of culture and interdisciplinary thinking. Images play an important part in his philosophic reflections and it is not surprising he had close contacts with Naples' painters and sculptors. The first major Neapolitan work which showed significant influence of Vico's ideas was Bernardo De Dominici's *Vite de pittori*,

scultori ed architetti napoletani (The lives of Neapolitan painters, sculptors and architects), first published between 1742–45. And while the links are more tenuous it would be dull to presume no interaction between Vico's theory of primitive poetry and song, and the spectacular developments of Neapolitan opera in the 1720s.

The primary aim of this study is to inform readers interested by Vico's bizarre and compelling prose about the creative activity of late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Naples. I will describe some of the issues and problems that Neapolitan intellectuals perceived in this cultural and social world of the late baroque and how they answered them. Special attention will be given to the concept of science, to Vico's notion of imaginative universals, and to writers who developed an historical approach to the study of religious experience. I am not claiming to have found some undiscovered or unnoticed origin for Vico's ideas, nor will I argue that we have grounds for believing that Vico had a substantial but hitherto unacknowledged impact on the development of the history of ideas in Europe. We know a good deal more about Vico's possible readership, and Vico may not have been as forgotten as was once thought, but these investigations have not proved any wholesale borrowing or massive unacknowledged debt. I do not claim to have resolved hotly debated issues concerning the philosophic interpretation of Vico's thought, but I hope a better understanding of his milieu can lead to greater precision and clarity in these investigations.

With some past cultural communities, intellectual historians are lucky and find that the most innovative and creative thinkers engaged in stimulating dialogue with the best minds of the preceding and the succeeding generations. Bad luck has always been an important factor in Neapolitan calculations; and unfortunately for Vico's fame, the problems addressed by the thinkers of mid-eighteenth century Naples were very different from those that appeared soluable or of interest in the 1720s. Vico's work had little obvious impact even in Naples. By studying how knowledge and interest in ideas were transmitted during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century I believe we can get a better sense of why this happened and why this intellectual community did not create what we might spontaneously recognize as Vico's Naples. Vico's books are the product of a powerful and fertile imagination and created by a mind living in a vibrant cultural community; his ability to make unexpected connections has continued to astound readers with their relevance. It is to

be hoped that some researcher will take this analysis further, continuing the story after Vico's death. His influence has been hard to trace and such a history would have to concern the difficult problem of showing how Vico affected a readership that did not have his books or only knew of them indirectly.

CHAPTER ONE

PRINTING AND READING IN NAPLES IN THE LATE 1680S

The Visit of Mabillon and Burnet

The population of seventeenth century Naples had declined from the previous century, still the city's numbers were probably only surpassed in Christian Europe by London and Paris.¹ But Naples' political significance and that of the western Mediterranean region generally was fundamentally altered from what it had been in the sixteenth century. Amsterdam, London and Paris were the leading cities of European power and cultural life; Naples had a place in that world but it was on the periphery of these new centers of activity. While Naples was no backwater, the most successful scholars and artists often left to pursue their careers in more prestigious locations like Rome, Florence, or Madrid. If they chose to return to Naples it was on their own terms. Nevertheless Naples did develop a remarkable intellectual and artistic community and in the eighteenth century its accomplishments perhaps even surpassed those of Edinburgh and Königsberg, cities on the northern and eastern borders of cosmopolitan life and enlightened ideas.

At the end of the seventeenth century, it was rare for even authors with an international reputation to junket about. But in the fall of 1685 two of Europe's most prestigious historians of the Christian religion arrived in Naples. One was an Englishman, the foremost scholar of the English Reformation and an Anglican bishop, Gilbert Burnet; and the other was Jean Mabillon, a French Benedictine, who had developed a scientific method to edit medieval Latin manuscripts. In their different ways they represented the best achievements of their

¹ In 1688, the census was 186,629, the 1707 count was 216,608, by 1742 the city contained some 310,000; the numbers did not reach the million claimed for it in the early seventeenth century. Naples had been dealt a devastating blow by a plague in 1656 that destroyed between a third and half of the city's inhabitants. Claudia Petraccone, *Napoli dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento: problemi di storia demografica e sociale* (Napoli: Guida, 1974), pp. 32, 130–31, 134–35, 150.

rival religious traditions. Because both men published accounts of their Italian journeys, we know a good deal about their visit. There is no evidence that the two met in Naples, and certainly no indication that they talked and exchanged ideas. It would have been a curious encounter—Burnet, the youngest son of a Scottish lord, and Mabillon, from a French farming family in Normandy. If they had talked together it would have been arranged by Giuseppe Valletta who hosted both men.² Valletta was the son of a tailor, who made his fortune by marrying a rich widow; he augmented his capital by his work as a lawyer. Valletta was no stranger to learning; he knew Greek and, to promote its study, he endowed a Chair in Greek at the University of Naples.

The simultaneous arrival of such illustrious intellectuals went unnoticed in the hullabaloo of such a large city as Naples. It is not surprising that Domenico Confuorto, probably a lawyer or notary, whose diary is a marvelous source on late seventeenth century Neapolitan life, news and gossip, makes no mention of their arrival.³ Mabillon and his travelling companion, Michel Germain, were housed at the city's religious houses. Among their guides was Gerolamo Alciato, a descendent of the great sixteenth century jurist, Andrea Alciato. They spent time with Giuseppe Valletta, the owner and collector of one of the finest libraries in Italy, and, also with Francesco D'Andrea, the leading legal scholar of the kingdom.⁴ Valletta's library was given special mention in the guide books for travellers in Italy. He was an avid purchaser of manuscripts, old editions and had an interesting assortment of contemporary books. Valletta also had an impressive collection of Greek vases, or, as they were called

² Fausto Nicolini, *Aspetti della vita italo-spagnuola nel Cinque e Seicento* (Napoli: Guida, 1934) 292–3.

³ Luigi Cajani, "Confuorto, Domenico", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 28, 10–11.

⁴ For a biography of Valletta see Vittor Ivo Comparato, *Giuseppe Valletta: un intellettuale napoletano della fine del Seicento* (Napoli: Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici, 1970). On the contents of his Library see Rak's edition of Giuseppe Valletta, *Opere filosofiche* (Firenze: Olschki, 1975), 416–29, 511–619. Francesco D'Andrea has been the subject of three important biographies: Biagio De Giovanni, *Filosofia e diretto in Francesco D'Andrea: contributo alla storia del previchismo* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1958); Salvo Mastellone, *Francesco D'Andrea: politico e giurista (1648–1698) L'ascesa del ceto civile* (Firenze: Olschki, 1969); and Raffaele Colapietra, *L'amabile fiera di Francesco D'Andrea: Il Seicento napoletano nel carteggio con Gian Andrea Doria* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1981). De Giovanni's book marked a new beginning in studies of Vico's Naples by placing a positive emphasis on the intellectual context of Vico's time in contrast to the approach of Croce and his students.

at the time Etruscan vases. According to Winckelmann he was the first Italian to amass such a collection. In the library there were two striking paintings one of Cesare Borgia, a notorious exemplar from Machiavelli's *The Prince*, attributed to Titian; and a portrait of Masienello, or Thomas Aniello, a fisherman who achieved international notice when he led a rebellion in 1648 that drove the Spanish from Naples and created the Most Serene Republic of the Kingdom of Naples.⁵ Masienello symbolized the possibility of a popular uprising against an autocratic rule; Borgia was another violent revolutionary and reformer of established institutions. The rhetoric of the paintings' position seemed significant;—did Valletta know the story that Spinoza had worn a fishing cap as a homage to Masienello? While Mabillon's arrival was anticipated it seems that Burnet's visit came as a complete surprise. According to Giuseppe Valletta, if it hadn't been for him, Burnet might have passed through Naples and not have been noticed by anyone.⁶ Valletta was quite enthusiastic to host Burnet just as he had already done for Mabillon and Germain. Pietro Andrea Andreini, a Florentine who was then residing in Naples, wrote of meeting with Burnet; but he notes that while Mabillon was surrounded by crowds, Burnet was practically left alone.⁷ Given Mabillon's international reputation, and the fact that up to this time most of Burnet's works were only available in English, this response was not surprising. And, from Burnet's point of view, based on what he wrote in the *Travels*, he does not seem to have felt slighted.

Burnet's stay was less than a week and Mabillon remained more than a month, but in essence they concurred about what they found in Naples. Both were hosted by Giuseppe Valletta and both admired Valletta's private library. Mabillon spent some time with his manuscript collection. The library was a gathering place for many of Naples' intellectuals. Mabillon wrote with admiration of the learning of the

⁵ At least this is how the library looked in 1721 when the English traveller Edward Wright visited it; given the kinds of things Wright appeared to notice spontaneously, these two portraits were pointed out to him, or they had an extremely prominent position. Edward Wright, *Some Observations made in travelling through France, Italy, etc. in the years 1720, 1721, and 1722* (London: Tho. Ward and E. Wicksteed, 1730), p. 158.

⁶ *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*, ed Amedeo Quondam and Michele Rak (Napoli: Guida, 1978), 1066–67.

⁷ *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*, 1194–95. Among Mabillon's local guides was Carlo Celano, a writer of comedies, who in 1692 published for tourists his *Notizie del bello, dell'antico e del curioso della città di Napoli per i signori forestieri*.

scholars he met in Naples; Burnet praised the level of the conversation he found in Valletta's library as the most open and candid he had found in Italy. The clergy, he was told, regarded these men as atheists; but he found them to be honorable, sensible and virtuous. Was Burnet, a Protestant divine, sufficiently trained to recognize a Catholic atheist? Burnet certainly thought so. Had he not attended the libertine John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, at his death? And, had he not saved this reprobate from the fiery pit by a deathbed conversion? On this occasion Burnet had been able to obtain a return to the faith of one of the most notorious libertines and free-thinkers of the age. Looking out for atheists wasn't much in Mabillon's line of work. Significantly, Mabillon, who talked to a lot of clergymen, reported nothing that would indicate atheism in Naples, let alone hostility between Valletta's friends and members of the local clergy.

Burnet had a thing about atheists; it seems that part of the purpose of his journey was to confirm what he already "knew": that Roman Catholicism was the primary source of unbelief and impiety in Christianity. He had found a good number of these atheists in Venice. He asserted that Venetian atheism was the "dullest and coarsest thing that can be imagined".⁸ Coarser than Rochester? Dull and coarse are not the adjectives one would expect to associate with a cultured Venetian of the end of the seventeenth century; it is difficult to know to what Burnet was reacting because he does not give examples of what he has in mind or to whom he was referring. Atheism was a highly charged term; while not devoid of meaning, the word alone does not give a precise content to what Burnet had heard in Venice. Burnet came to Italy seeking atheists, so perhaps it isn't surprising that he found them in Venice, a city noted for fulfilling the secret thrills and desires of travellers from the North. Burnet's statement may not tell us much on the presence or absence of atheists in Venice, but it does suggest that he felt comfortable with the terms of theological discussion in Naples, less so in Venice. In Venice he was quite willing to make the judgement of atheism; and he could see right off that the Neapolitan friends of Valletta weren't atheists. It is just this kind of judgement he believed Catholic clergy were unable to make for themselves. He conceived most Catholic priests to

⁸ Gilbert Burnet, *Travels Through France, Italy, Germany and Switzerland* (London: Payne, 1750), 152.

be limited in intellectual vision and likely to misconstrue a rational discussion supported by a manly advocacy as impiety.

Given the different approaches and interests of these two historians an encounter between Burnet and Mabillon would have produced little. Burnet, like all scholars of the day played at the game of suggesting textual emendations and dating manuscripts, but he was no match for Mabillon. For example, Burnet looked at a Latin translation of Josephus in Milan and guessed it was written in the fifth century; Mabillon saw the same manuscript, knew that it dated from around the twelfth century and could explain why. In any event Mabillon and Burnet were not, nor did they become adversaries.

The contrast between Burnet and Mabillon might be instructive for a Neapolitan concerned about methods and approaches to religious studies and comparative religion. Burnet was bound to appear a radical to those living in a Catholic country; to a Protestant, his writings simply confirmed beliefs and did not challenge them. The English Revolution of 1688–89 made it clearer how a Catholic might judge Burnet: he would be linked with a republicanism that trampled on the rights of his legitimate sovereign, James II, to further the private ambition of his new master, William of Orange. Burnet's critique of Catholicism would be read as part of an ideology not far removed from Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, first published in 1670. Spinoza had developed his principles specifically for reading the Hebrew Bible; his radical conclusions were equated with atheism and exemplified the views of free-thinkers and those who scoffed at true religion. He described the Bible as if it were written by men who had no special assistance from God; he reduced true religion to a simple morality; denied the reality of miracles; and he concluded arguing for the toleration of religious difference and the need for the freedom of speech. Spinoza's thought was equated with political radicalism. He openly advocated republicanism as the only government in which there could be both true religious piety and civil peace.

In his *Travels* Burnet was the tourist who only saw what he was prepared and expecting to see. He approached his journey with the mental geography of the 1550s. Like a later day John Knox he perceived the world divided between Calvin's Geneva and Papal Rome. Setting aside the partial exception he makes of Naples, Protestant lands contain interesting scholars, growing populations, lively commerce, and hard working farmers prospering despite a rugged terrain; in Catholic countries the intellectual lights are few and flicker

faintly, their countryside is desolate, all but empty of people, despite the natural fertility of the land. The French countryside, Lombardy, Tuscany and the Romagna were scenes of poverty and depopulation; Switzerland, despite its unpromising soil was a populous and thriving region. Burnet jests theologically that if one were to judge by works, then clearly Protestant industry, virtue and faith were to be preferred to Catholic laziness, corruption and "good works". Burnet used his *Travels* as a way to chronicle Catholic superstition and fraud as well as their incredulity and impiety. Thus Burnet will complain that in Naples there are 24 houses of Dominicans, 22 of Franciscans, 7 of Jesuits and a slew of others; but he makes no notice of the Kingdom's 119 Princes, 156 Dukes, 173 Marquises, 42 Counts and 445 Barons.⁹

Burnet was a theological pugilist, and intended his works to stir up a hornet's nest of adversaries. His primary opponent in the mid 1680s was the Catholic Antoine Varillas, a former French Royal historiographer. The work that most directly touched Burnet was Varillas' history of the Reformation published between 1686–90. Varillas' account was a partisan, pro-Catholic history. Burnet prepared attacks on the sections concerning England. In Burnet's view Varillas made up facts, easily fell into anachronism, and the work showed signs that it was composed under the influence of cases of champagne. Burnet published some of his attacks in the *Reflections on Mr. Varillas's History etc.* which were added as supplements to later editions of his *Travels*. These kinds of postscripts were suited to Burnet's book, because the *Travels* themselves were in large measure a barely veiled polemic against Roman Catholicism.

Burnet's anti-Roman focus of the *Travels* made it easy to add supplementary essays on controversial topics in subsequent editions of the work. He was very interested in the Quietist movement in Catholicism and especially its suppression at the end of the decade.¹⁰

⁹ For a more up to date accounting see, Claudio Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia: Secoli XIV–XVIII* (Bari: Laterza, 1988) 280, 288. In 1691, Biagio Aldimari asserted there were some 1,900 noble families in the Kingdom, Salvatore Mastellone, *Pensiero politica e vita culturale a Napoli nella seconda metà del Seicento* (Firenze: D'Anna, 1965), 7–8. And, Raffaele Ajello, "Potere ministeriale e società al tempo di Giannone: Il modello napoletano nella storia del pubblico funzionario" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, ed. R. Ajello (Napoli: Jovene, 1980), 513–536.

¹⁰ Romeo De Maio "Il problema del quietismo napoletano", *Rivista storica italiana*, (1969) 81, 721–744. Romano Canosa, *Storia dell'inquisizione in Italia dalla metà del Cinquecento alla fine del Settecento: Napoli e Bologna, la procedura inquisitoriale*, vol. 5 (Roma:

Subsequent editions of *The Travels* also included lengthy essays by an unnamed Italian who brought Burnet's book up to date on the controversies or repressions involving the Quietists in Rome. But by 1688 Burnet had lost interest in the Italian scene and focused all his efforts to aiding William of Orange to the English throne. When Burnet came to write his last major work, a quasi-autobiography, *A History of His Own Time*, the episode of his Italian tour is relegated to a footnote. Mid-eighteenth century editions of Burnet's *Travels* were identified for what they were, a Protestant attack on Catholicism. *The Travels* were collected in multivolume sets of the Bishop's *Tracts*.

Mabillon's *Iter* had its own rhetorical points to make, and unlike Burnet he had to be careful how he criticized the influence of Rome and Catholic life. He also needed to play down the fact that it was a Frenchman who was coming to Italy to show the locals what treasures they possessed. But the facts were that while the Italians may have had the manuscripts, they didn't know what to do with them. Mabillon, the visiting scholar arrived and explained to them the pearls that they had under their very noses. Besides being an account of people met and things seen, he used the *Iter* as a kind of bibliographic review essay. He took what he found in libraries or in ancient inscriptions as occasions to summarize and describe what others had written on the topic, and frequently he would correct or refute previous claims. Instead of doing the same thing in a learned note or an appendix, Mabillon adapted the more leisurely narrative of a journey for this purpose.

A comparison of Mabillon and Germain's voluminous correspondence during their trip and what actually appeared in the *Iter* is instructive. We learn that they regularly read the Protestant book review journals, the *Acta Eruditorum* and Bayle's *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*. From their letters one learns of their interest in the politics of Italy, a topic scarcely mentioned in the *Iter*. They comment on the gossip and seem amused with the stories about a depraved Neapolitan priest who flees Rome in disgrace. Their letters indicate how closely they followed the controversy concerning the Quietists who were followers of the Spanish mystic Molinos. An important element

Sapere 2000, 1990), 5, 105–118. See also, Ted A. Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991) 29–36; he concentrates on the impact of the Quietists in France.

in Molinos' meditation practice was silent prayer. A letter of August, 1685 reports a popular verse that was circulating: "If you talk they'll send you to the galleys; if you write, they'll send you to the hangman; and, if you're silent, they'll send you to the Holy Office of the Inquisition".¹¹ This too is invisible in the *Iter*. Instead Mabillon gives a vision of a community of interesting Italian scholars, a beautiful countryside, impressive art works and intriguing antiquities.

Mabillon's textual science of dating manuscripts, called diplomatics, aimed to bring a non-sectarian method into the study of the Christian Middle Ages. The method was intended to be independent of theological argument and it aspired to be inoffensive and not subject to the concerns of ecclesiastical censorship (this ideal was not always attained). It was based on a disciplined attention to detail, it used certain rules and procedures; arguments and disputes were conducted within the framework of right reason, not theology. Fairly quickly European scholars accepted this approach to the documents, texts and pictorial representations that survived the ancient and medieval world. To be sure Mabillon and the other members of the Congregation of St. Maur couldn't control all editions of texts, but they set the standard; even Leibniz whose mind had astounding imaginative and inventive range chose to adopt their method for his historical research rather than develop one of his own. Significant for this study, while Mabillon found many students eager to learn his method in northern Italy, scarcely any in Naples took it up. Valletta admired Mabillon's work but did not join his research program; instead, he began to learn English.

How Naples' Intellectual Community Reacted to the 1688 Earthquake

Mabillon and Burnet gave a very sunny account of the quality of mind and serious character of the Neapolitan intellectuals they met. How did this community function, what did it read, and how were ideas circulated? The Library of Valletta seemed to be a common resource but we have scarcely any detailed evidence of how that institution influenced intellectual production. To understand how ideas were produced, reproduced, discarded or embraced by readers and

¹¹ *Correspondance inédite de Mabillon e de Montfaucon avec l'Italie*, ed. M. Valery (Paris: J. Labitte, 1846) 88.

writers requires some detailed local knowledge about the customs of Naples' literate culture. What was the normal way in which the reading public, authors, their patrons, and printers and booksellers interacted? Like any complex, dynamic, unfocused activity, there was much that was diffuse, ephemeral, and dull, but human for all that.

An earthquake which devastated southern Italy on June 5, 1688 provides a concise example of how certain elements of this cultural community interacted. The quake struck Naples in the early evening when many people were walking in the port area seeking cool air. Numerous buildings in the city were destroyed; the church of San Paolo Maggiore lost most of its facade which included columns from the original pagan temple built on the site for the Dioscuri; the dome of Gesù Nuovo, the main Jesuit church, was ruined. The destruction was even greater to the east in Benevento where many were killed; contemporary accounts spoke of Benevento as completely destroyed. The aftershocks created a fear of another major quake, and for days many Neapolitans slept out of doors. The 1688 earthquake, it was widely believed, was a punishment by God for the sins of Naples, and a graphic reminder of the mysterious ways Providence cares for us. Antonio Bulifon, Naples' most prestigious printer, described the event in a letter to Antonio Magliabechi, the great Florentine librarian and polymath. Bulifon even cited the page number in a guidebook he had published where Magliabechi could see an image of San Paolo Maggiore and appreciate the magnitude of the damage.¹² One noble lord had lost 5000 workers and 20,000 *scudi* in annual rents, but after these brief notices Bulifon's letter turned to the usual topic of their correspondence, new books. A more detailed description of the earthquake was published shortly after the event by the printer Domenico Antonio Parrino, who in a previous career was an actor. The pamphlet was entitled *Vera e distinta relatione dell'horribile e spaventosa terremoto accaduto in Napoli* (A true and accurate account of the dreadful and terrible earthquake that happened in Naples). The account, perhaps written by Parrino, details the destruction and explains that such divine judgements cannot be understood; history teaches that everything dies, we can only marvel at the changes wreaked. Subsequently a printer named Galassi, living in Todi who had a shop in Naples published a *Continuazione al racconto dell'orribil*

¹² *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*, p. 138.

terremoto (A Continuation of the account of the terrible earthquake).¹³

An English translation of Parrino's piece was printed in London in 1688 by the publisher Randall Taylor entitled *A True and Exact Relation of the Horrible and Terrifying Earthquake which Happened in Naples*. How Taylor acquired Parrino's pamphlet is unknown to me; perhaps it was passed on to him by an English visitor or one of the merchants who worked the Mediterranean trade. It seems that Taylor wanted a more substantial publication than Parrino's short pamphlet since he filled up additional pages with what we might call "indepth coverage" on the character of Naples and its citizens. In examples of this kind of moralizing pamphlet from the previous century, typically the printer would have included a second exemplary story, perhaps even unrelated to the main story; the addition of local color was a recent innovation to this genre. He tells his reader that Naples "is exceeding populous, and consequently vicious". He continues, punning on the dual trade in fresh fruits and prostitution, a combination which would be known to his readers from the opportunities in Covent Garden: "He that desires to live a chaste life must not set up here; for as their gardens are well filled with oranges, so their Houses want not lemons. There are usually thirty thousand citizens registered that pay taxes for their pleasure".¹⁴ Information about prostitution is not what one would expect to learn from a traveller like Burnet or Mabillon.

Besides Parrino's 1688 pamphlet there were many other published works that appeared in Naples about the earthquake; one of these is that kind of human interest story which shows a silver lining in the cloud. Vincenzo Maria Orsini related that right in the middle of the earthquake, when Benevento was collapsing around him, the Arch-

¹³ About a hundred years later in the mid 1780s Ferdinando Galiani published a spoof on this genre; his *Spaventosissime descrizione dello spaventoso spaventa . . .* (The most terrifying description of the terrible terror). His essay concerns an eruption of Vesuvius.

¹⁴ *Vera e distinta relatione dell'horribile e spaventoso terremoto accaduto in Napoli* (Napoli: Domenico Antonio Parrino, 1688). *A True and Exact Relation of the Horrible and Terrifying Earthquake which happened in Naples* (London: Randall Taylor, 1688), p. 25. Randall Taylor has the distinction of publishing in 1694 John Houghton's famous and influential account of London's stock market as part of his series of pamphlets called *A collection for improvement of husbandry and trade*, a series running from 1692–1703. Houghton's aim was to link the science of the Royal Society with the technologies and methods used in commerce and business. On the issue of prostitution and the presence of women it is perhaps fair to record the experience of François Misson who in 1688 complained that the problem with Naples was that he couldn't meet any women because they were all locked up indoors.

bishop of Benevento received a miraculous cure for his eye disease. The miracle, it was said, was brought about by St. Filippo Neri. This pamphlet was published in Naples by Novellis de Bonis in 1688.¹⁵ Confuorto's *Diary* mentions this publication on June 18 and includes a copy.¹⁶

Another sort of publication relating to the earthquake were poems written about the event.¹⁷ Some of these appeared in the form of simple broadsides identifying the author, and others were anonymous. Poems on the earthquake circulated in manuscript as well. The decision whether to print or circulate a poem in manuscript was not usually a matter of money or fear of censorship. For certain kinds of literary productions, and depending on an author's status and income, going into print meant to cross a significant boundary. Publication put a book, essay or poem in the public eye, different rules applied to the criticism and praise of a printed text than to a manuscript. Authors could maintain a reputation in their local community without ever going to print. For Neapolitans the decision to put a work into print carried more significance than simply making something public for manuscript circulation had much the same effect; and circulating a work in manuscript did not simply indicate an author's difficulty in getting something off their desk and out the door. In this baroque world the decision to print involved ritual elements which transformed the work into a different kind of performance.

Some printed fairly substantial earthquake poems; there were pieces such as Pietro Sigillo's *Partenope dolente* ("Sorrowing Parthenope"—Parthenope was a Siren and Naples' legendary first inhabitant); Domenico Andrea de Milo published an ode on the event; and there was Gennaro Sportelli's *Napoli flagellato da Dio* (Naples Whipped by God).¹⁸ Such works carried dedications to members of the nobility

¹⁵ Vincenzo Maria Orsini, *Narrazione de prodigii operati del glorioso S. Filippo Neri* (Napoli: Novellis de Bonis, 1688).

¹⁶ Domenico Confuorto, *Giornale di Napoli dal MDCLXXIX al MDCIC*, ed. Nicola Nicolini (Napoli: Lubrano, 1930), pp. 220–21. In his entry concerning the earthquake Confuorto had included a pamphlet describing the event, probably Parrino's, but it is missing from his text.

¹⁷ Silvia Grassi Fiorentino, "'Nella sera della Domenica. . . ' Il terremoto del 1703 in Umbria: trauma e reintegrazione", *Quaderni storici*, (1984) 55, 138–154, describes a near contemporary event in Umbria but makes no mention of poetic responses to the event. Was such a reaction peculiar to Naples?

¹⁸ Domenico Andrea de Milo, *Per lo tremuoto* (Napoli: Antonio Gramignani, 1688); Pietro Sigillo, *Partenope dolente* (Napoli: Carlo Porfile, 1688); Gennaro Sportelli, *Napoli flagellata da Dio* (Napoli: Francesco Benzi, 1688).

and this patronage indicates some of the ways the elite helped their community in times of public sorrow. Today we wouldn't expect intellectuals, as a matter of course, to take to verse to mourn a public catastrophe or even the loss of their personal library or research notes. Nor would we expect a person of wealth or a foundation to commission poems as a way of providing aid to a community hit by a disaster. But in seventeenth century Naples this was part of the role of the scholar and patron. Unlike the prose account of Parrino, the poems do not personalize what happened or record specific events; after all poetry concerns universals, history, particulars. Nor do the poets use the earthquake as a metaphor for larger philosophical ideas as Voltaire was to use his poetic voice in his reaction to the Lisbon earthquake. The poems express grief and sorrow and appeal to the community's awareness of loss and sin. The earthquake publications tell us some things about readers in Naples. Domenico Confuorto has left an account of his experience of the event. Like many survivors of a disaster Confuorto turned to the news account to understand what had happened around him and to himself. To supplement the remarks in his diary he inserted the news pamphlets into his text. Beyond pamphlet literature, it is hard to know what else Confuorto read.

Neapolitan Printing in the Late 1680s

To get a broader view of what was read at Naples we must look elsewhere. One source of information would be what books were available in Naples, those that were imported and those printed in the city. As we all know ownership of a book has no necessary correlation with reading. And, in many vibrant intellectual communities there is a lot of wonderful talk about new ideas, methodologies and achievements, and usually more talk than reading and research. Informed and lively discussion of an approach or point of view can happen without much preparatory study. The publication of an item tells us that it was present in a community, but the understanding of its significance can be more difficult to assess. To determine what volumes Neapolitans read, or seemed apt to purchase, it is useful to distinguish between reprintings and completely new editions. At this time most publishers were booksellers and most of their sales were in their local market. First editions were likely to be subsidized by the author or the author's patron; hence what sales potential the work

had in the publisher's mind cannot be known from the mere fact of publication.¹⁹ But when a printer undertook to issue a new edition or reprint a text, a just inference would be that there was an expectation that the item would sell. Hence, I would argue, new editions of older works prepared by Neapolitan printers, are strong indicators of what seemed to be the interests of Neapolitan readers and authors who were also readers.²⁰

Therefore, when Giacomo Raillard decided to reprint works of the great Florentine biologist Francesco Redi, this tells us something about the kinds of books Neapolitans not only would talk about but also buy. Redi's best known accomplishment is his demonstration that insects and other vermin do not grow from decaying matter. His series of experiments, while they didn't disprove spontaneous generation, made its claims more questionable. Giacomo Raillard was a French printer who had come to Naples in the 1670s, and who, by this time, had firmly established his reputation in this community. At the end of the 1680s he seems to have decided to publish an entire series of scientific works with an emphasis on medicine and the biological sciences. He began with the printing of five volumes of Redi's works. While Raillard was clearly promoting Redi's work, he was also calling attention to Naples' own indigenous scientific culture by the dedications for each work. Redi's *Osservazione intorno alle vipere* (Observations concerning vipers) (first published in 1664) was dedicated to Aniello di Napoli, a doctor and a promoter of the thought of Descartes and Gassendi; the *Esperienze intorno alla generazione degli insetti* (Experiments concerning the generation of insects) (first edition 1668) was dedicated to Francesco D'Andrea, a Neapolitan lawyer having an international reputation; Raillard dedicated the *Esperienze intorno a diverse cose naturali* (Experiments concerning a variety of natural objects) (which first appeared in 1671) to Tommaso Donzelli, a prominent physician; the more recent *Osservazioni . . . intorno agli animali viventi che si trovano negli animali viventi* (Observations about living animals that are found in other living animals) (published in Florence in 1684) was dedicated to Leonardo di Capoa, a doctor and medical

¹⁹ On problems in getting works published in Northern Italy, see Françoise Waquet, "I letterati-editori: produzione, finanziamento e commercio del libro erudito in Italia e in Europa (XVII-XVIII Secolo)", *Quaderni storici*, (1989) 72, 821-838.

²⁰ For demographic information on printers and booksellers and their readers consider the data presented by Claudia Petraccone, *Napoli dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento*, 90-93, 125-126.

researcher. Raillard also reprinted Redi's long poem *Bacco in Toscana* (Bacchus in Tuscany) (1685) and dedicated this to Giuseppe Valletta, the host of Mabillon and Burnet.²¹

Dedications were not mere window dressing but ways of selling and promoting a book. These dedications were part of the patronage network and were ways of proclaiming intellectual alliances. In an era before a structured system of peer review, such public statements were ways of conferring recognition and approval of another's research or literary gifts. We know who Redi is because the history of science has canonized him; a Neapolitan lawyer of the 1680s might know his name but linking him with a local luminary like D'Andrea or Valletta, say, would confirm the importance of Redi's work. In a time when many new theories and methods were being promoted these kinds of dedications could tell a potential reader in Naples which of these new works would be worth their time. The function of these dedications were similar to our reviewers' blurbs printed on the dust jacket or back cover which encourage a potential reader to actually plunk down the cash for the book. Raillard chose individuals to receive the dedications who would have been well known to Neapolitan readers. Valletta, in a letter to Magliabecchi in December of 1687, wrote he was eagerly awaiting a copy of Burnet's *Travels*, and that he was considering whether to accept the dedication for Redi's *Bacco in Toscano*.²² His hesitation is significant; such a connection with the book would make him a patron of it and to some extent responsible for its sales.

The Redi publication set the stage for Raillard's subsequent editions of works by the most famous Neapolitan scientists. In 1688 he published the *Opera quaedam posthuma* (Posthumous works) of Tommaso Cornelio, the founder of the modern scientific movement in Naples. Part of this work was dedicated to Francesco D'Andrea. Raillard followed this in 1689 with new editions of two works of Leonardo di Capoa, *Parere* (Thoughts) and *Ragionamenti intorno alla incertezza de' medicamente* (Arguments concerning the uncertainties in medical treat-

²¹ Antonio Borrelli, "Fortuna di Francesco Redi a Napoli nel Sei-Settecento", in *Galileo e Napoli*, ed. Fabrizio Lomonaco and Maurizio Torrini (Napoli: Guida, 1987) p. 420. Evidence that Raillard did not seek or obtain an international market for his work is indicated by the fact that these volumes are reviewed in neither the *Giornale dei Letterati* or the *Acta Eruditorum*, though they reviewed other works he printed during the same time.

²² *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*, p. 1083.

ment). Cornelio, D'Andrea, Di Capoa, and Valletta were the leaders of the Modern scientific movement in Naples. It was said that until Cornelio returned to Naples in 1649 after studying with the students of Galileo in Florence and Rome, that even the names of Descartes and Gassendi were unknown to the Neapolitans. With Di Capoa he organized scientific academies and encouraged others to adopt the experimental methods followed by the successors to Galileo. Cornelio performed interesting demonstrations for the *Investiganti*, a learned society he had founded, aiming to show that a vacuum could indeed exist in nature; the explanations he proposed for these experiments indicated his acceptance of a version of the atomic hypothesis.²³ His published writings studied the heavenly bodies, the nature of light and human physiology.²⁴ While Cornelio attacked the Aristotelians, Di Capoa attacked the Galenists.²⁵ Instead of the theory of the bodily humours, Di Capoa preferred what was known in the seventeenth century as an iatrochemical approach, which traced its origins to the work of Paracelsus. But Di Capoa's greatest notoriety came from his attacks on some traditional practices of the medical profession debunking the certainties claimed for its theories, in particular he opposed the common practice of bleeding patients. Medical science in his view needed to be rethought from the ground up; the only conclusions that should be accepted were those founded on experiment and observation.²⁶ In 1695 Raillard published another edition of Di Capoa's works; this time Tomasso Donzelli, a Neapolitan doctor with an international reputation, provided an introductory note to the reader. D'Andrea, though a lawyer, was an active participant and promoter of the scientific projects of Cornelio and Di Capoa.²⁷

Other printers also issued works of scientific interest. Bulifon printed a Latin edition of Lucretius in 1693, a significant publication given

²³ Maurizio Torrini, "L'Accademia degli Investiganti. Napoli 1663-1670", *Quaderni storici* (1981) 48, 845-883; Max H. Fisch, "The Academy of the Investigators" in *Science, Medicine and History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953); Vittor Ivo Comparato, "Cornelio, Tommaso", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 29, 136-140.

²⁴ On Cornelio see, Maurizio Torrini, *Tommaso Cornelio e la ricostruzione della scienze* (Napoli: Guida, 1977); Francesco Crispini, *Metafisica del senso e scienza della vita. Tommaso Cornelio* (Napoli: Guida, 1975).

²⁵ Silvano Scalabrella, "Di Capua, Leonardo" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 39, 712-715.

²⁶ The best account of Di Capoa is Nicola Badaloni, *Introduzione a Vico* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1961), 124-147.

²⁷ Aldo Mazzacane, "D'Andrea, Francesco" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 32, 529-536.

the Neapolitan interest in the theory of atoms. New works also appeared: Parrino published the geometrical studies of Giovanni Battista Palma in 1689; in the same year Fasulo published Gaspare Paragallo's essay on the causes of earthquakes. Fasulo was to be sent to the galleys in 1696 for his role in publishing a Jesuit backed anti-atomist work; Paragallo was friends with Giacinto Cristofaro and Basilio Giannelli who were accused of atheism and atomism in an Inquisitorial investigation in the 1690s. In 1705 Raillard printed Paragallo's study of Mount Vesuvius; the volcano was a great staple of Neapolitan scientific writing.

In the early 1690s Raillard intended to publish a new edition of the scientific experiments of the Accademia del Cimento of Florence.²⁸ This body was the first European institution whose purpose was to perform and document scientific experiments. It was composed in part by students of Galileo, but all the experimenters were motivated by his example; a collection of their work was published in 1667, the *Saggi di naturali esperienze*.²⁹ This work was regarded as one of the great accomplishments of Italian science; an English translation appeared in 1684. But despite the book's reputation no Italian edition had appeared since the first. By the end of 1690 Raillard had nearly finished the sheets, but for some reason it did not appear at this time.³⁰ Perhaps Raillard got wind of a Florentine edition which appeared in 1691. In any event, he did publish what was the third edition in 1701, and another edition followed in 1704, which carried a dedication to Aniello di Napoli, who had supported the Redi publications. Naples was the source of the fifth edition in 1714, this time published by Raillard's son Barnardo-Michele. The dedicatory letter of this edition was signed by Cellenio Zacclori and Lorenzo Ciccarelli; the first name is an anagram of the second. Ciccarelli or Cicarelli, played a very important role in Neapolitan publishing of this time and later was instrumental in the publication of Vico's *Autobiography*. That same year of 1714 Ciccarelli, under the name Zacclori, ar-

²⁸ Naples had its own tradition of experimental science going back to the sixteenth century and the works of Bernardo Telesio. Badaloni describes this in the first chapter of his *Introduzione a Vico*.

²⁹ W.E. Knowles Middleton, *The experimenters: A Study of the Accademia del Cimento* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971). The first edition of the *Saggi* had been the first book reviewed in the first Italian book review journal in 1668.

³⁰ Bulifon mentions its near completion to Magliabecchi. *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabecchi*, p. 153.

ranged for the publication of a new edition of Leonardo di Capoa's works. He listed Cologne as the place of publication; this is probably false for the printer's device on the title page shows the river god Sebetes, Naples' river, lounging by the Bay of Naples with Vesuvius in the background. Da Capoa's works had been added to the index in 1695, hence the use of anagrams and the probably false place of publication.

Besides publishing the kinds of scientific works associated with the experimental school of Galileo, Raillard also printed what can be called Jesuit science. In 1688 he published Nicolo Partenio Giannettasio's *Universalis cosmographia elementa*, a work intended for use at the local Jesuit Collegio.³¹ In the front of the book were two letters certifying that the work offered no challenge to Catholic orthodoxy or the authority of the state. These letters were then followed by responses from officials of the church and state granting the printer the right to publish the book. The Prefect of the Jesuit Collegio, Giovanni Battista Benedetti, was the author of the letter to the representatives of secular government.³² This kind of letter was needed for all books published in Naples and the letters would appear at the beginning or end of the text. For most publications in Naples there were two letters, though, on occasion there was only one letter on behalf of the work's orthodoxy.³³ Like the dedicatory letters, these two letters had a peer review function. First the letters indicated the book met certain standards, and frequently, the identity of the approvers would indicate to a potential reader something of the approach and presuppositions of the work. The printer, where possible chose the approvers in consultation with the author; it was not impossible for an approver to also receive the Dedication. Clearly an approver was already an advocate of the book. Their function was

³¹ Nicola Maria Giannettasio, *Universalis cosmographia elementa* (Napoli: Giacomo Raillard, 1688). The Collegio was first opened in 1679; prior to that there were only three other collegi in Naples each intended for the young men of a specific noble family. Gian Paolo Brizzi, *La formazione della classe dirigente nel Sei-Settecento*, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1976), pp. 59–60.

³² Augusto De Ferrari, "De Benedictis, Giovanni Battista", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 33, 368–371.

³³ The serious regard given to such approval letters is indicated in the correspondence of Lucantonio Porzio who, in a 1693 letter, makes special mention of the approver of a book he is referring to justify its authority. Maurizio Torrini "Cinque lettere di Lucantonio Porzio in difesa della moderna filosofia" in *Atti dell'accademia di scienze morali e politiche* (Napoli), 1979, 90, 151.

not the critical rebuke and encouragement offered by the disembodied anonymous peer reviewers. Approvers' names are another source of intellectual alliances in Naples. And, because approvals were needed or customarily sought from the clergy as well as the civil state, they give interesting information about the interchange between the secular academics and their sacred counterparts.

Giannettasio's work was aimed at a popular audience and included a general survey of a variety of scientific theories concerning the structure of the cosmos. He described the major systems of the world proposed by Ptolemy, Copernicus, Tycho and Riccioli. The system of the world envisaged by Tycho was of the earth at the center, the sun rotating around the earth, and all the other planets circling the sun. The system of Riccioli was also known as the semi-Tychonian system; it agreed with Tycho except that Jupiter and Saturn were thought to circle the earth, not the sun.³⁴ The Jesuits had favored Tycho's and Riccioli's model in the seventeenth century, and after the case of Galileo, Tycho's system was given a kind of canonical status in the Jesuit schools. Perhaps by the end of the century it was only in Italy where scientists would still profess their approval for Tycho's or Riccioli's model. In his illustrations Giannettasio shows models of all four world systems and concludes his evaluation of the evidence by arguing for the superiority of a Tycho type model. Giannettasio's work had a certain popularity, or to be more precise, it was destined to be used as a school text and Raillard reprinted it in 1692 and 1701.

A more erudite work of Jesuit science and scholarship printed in Naples at this time was Giovanni Battista Benedetti's *Philosophia peripatetica*, a four volume work. Volume 2, the first to appear, was published in 1687 by Salvatore Castaldi; volume 1, published by Giacomo Raillard came out in 1688; and Raillard brought out the last two volumes in 1692.³⁵ Volume 1 contained the approvals; the sacred one was by Giannettasio. This kind of mutual admiration society of

³⁴ Edward Grant, "Celestial perfection from the Middle Ages to the late seventeenth century", in *Religion, science, and worldview: essays in honor of Richard S. Westfall* ed. Margaret J. Osler and Paul Lawrence Farber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 157–62. One curious consequence of Riccioli's argument, noted by Grant, is that not only was the earth the center of the cosmos, it is also the most perfect place in the cosmos.

³⁵ Giovanni Battista Benedetti, *Philosophia peripatetica* (Napoli: Salvatore Castaldi (v. 2), Giacomo Raillard (v. 1, 3, 4), 1687–1692).

back to back approvals was uncommon but certainly was within the spirit of the system. Giannettasio had done approvals for Benedetti previously. In 1686 he had given the secular approval for the first volume of Benedetti's *Analecta Poetica*, a collection of lyric poetry; he did the same in 1689 for v. 2 which contained his epigrams.³⁶ (Freudians and, more generally, those interested in symbolic castration may note that the longest lyric is a poem addressed to Herod protesting the decapitation of the author's namesake John the Baptist).

The first volume of Benedetti's scientific treatise dealt with logic; the middle two, the longest, concerned physics; and the last volume dealt with metaphysics. Benedetti's work, like that of Gianattasio was something of a text book, though his was clearly for the advanced student. Benedetti doesn't so much present his own views as summarize a wide variety of research and investigation in a discipline, though his point of view was clearly expressed. While he was hostile to the doctrines of the materialists, he showed a competence, to a certain level, with the major developments of seventeenth century physics. He had doubts about Descartes' hypotheses, and argued against Bacon's inductions about the nature of heat, but he had high regard for the chemical work of Robert Boyle. Besides assessing the accomplishments of the leaders of European science, he also took on the most important figures in Naples' scientific community. He attacked those hostile to the achievement and reputation of Aristotle. Benedetti was convinced that wherever the theory of atoms and the philosophy of Democritus thrived, that community suffered moral decline.

We might imagine that such a multivolume work beginning with logic, ending with metaphysics, and written by a Jesuit who was committed to Aristotle's thought to be an obvious candidate for the library of unread and unreadable books. Nevertheless, Benedetti's work must have appeared to be a useful compendium because, in 1723 a Venetian printer published a new edition. This work may deserve a small place in the history of textbooks that would include illustrious predecessors such as Eustachius' *Summa* and Maignan's *Cursus*. We no longer look back to such syntheses as hallmarks of scientific accomplishment; but this is probably a failing of our own

³⁶ Giovanni Battista Benedetti, *Analecta Poetica* (Napoli: Castaldi, 1686, v. 1; Raillard, 1689, v. 2). Castaldi was a lawyer but was involved in publishing, primarily poetry and opera libretti. It is possible that he financed volume one and had hired Raillard to print it; then Raillard took on the responsibility for the remainder.

research. We even lack a history of the Jesuit scientific enterprise of the seventeenth century, and of what connects the vision of the polymath Athanasius Kircher with the accomplishment of Roger Boscovich in the mid-eighteenth century. Kircher was a respected correspondant of Descartes, Mersenne and Leibniz, and also understood the hermetic tradition of the Renaissance. Boscovich's work aimed to reconcile the rivalry between followers of Newton and Leibniz; his compromise brought about a complete rethinking of the meaning of matter and (along with the ideas of Priestley) laid the ground for the field theory that Faraday reformulated in 1844.

The Emblematic Careers of Niccolo Giannettasio and Francesco Solimena

Niccolo Gianettasio, like Benedetti wrote poetry. Indeed his original training had been in the Latin classics and philosophy. The facts of his life and his career choices make his biography a summary of the crises of the middle years of the century and an exemplary career for his times. Gianettasio was born on March 5, 1648 in the Most Serene Republic of this Kingdom of Naples, the name given to the Republic created by Masaniello's Revolt of the previous July.³⁷ On April 6, 1648 the Spanish returned to the city and re-established Vice-regal rule. In 1656 his parents died in the great plague which killed between a third and perhaps a half of the people living in the city. Ten years later he became a novice in the Jesuit Order. As a Jesuit he taught humanities courses until his elevation to the Mathematics chair at the Jesuit Collegio, not as unusual a shift in teaching competency as it would seem to us. His first published book was a poetic work *Piscatoria et nautica* which appeared in 1685. It included an engraving by the up and coming artist Francesco Solimena. In the third eclogue he presents a contest of verses between two fishermen, one Giannettasio represents as standing for Giuseppe Valletta, the other was Francesco Solimena. This pairing of Valletta and

³⁷ In 1722 Domenico Raillard published a biography of Giannettasio as the preface to a posthumous edition of his poetical works. The life mentions the major journals that reviewed his work. Nicolo Giannetassio, *Annus Eruditus* (Napoli: Dominico Raillard, 1722). In June of 1723 the *Memoires de Trevoux* printed an "Éloge" based on this work. Some readers bound such publications with their copy of the author's work.

Solimena indicates the connections between intellectuals and artists. And, Solimena's frontispiece, engraved by De Louvemont is another reminder of the number of talents involved in book production at this time.³⁸

Born nine years after Giannettasio, in 1657, Solimena arrived in Naples in 1674 after receiving his initial training from his father Angelo. His family was typical of the generation following the mid-century traumas of revolution and plague: his parents wanted him to be a lawyer. His artistic talents persuaded them to allow him to follow his father's career and to become a painter. By the end of the 1670s he was already receiving major commissions and in 1681 he did an altar piece for the Abbey of Montecassino. Around this time he painted a "Santa Roasalia"; the Saint's rapt contemplation of God is said to suggest the silent prayer associated with the Quietist movement.³⁹ Whether this shows the religious feelings of Solimena or the patron is not known. In any event Solimena had no problem producing works in accord with the ideological program of his patrons. In 1689–90 he was hired by the Theatine fathers of San Paolo Maggiore to paint the ceiling of their Sacristy. We should avoid the notion of the solitary artist creating his own conceptions; painting, especially fresco work, involved an entire workshop of people. A diary entry of Confuorto from August 28, 1689 reminds us that many were involved in such productions, whose livelihoods depended on these commissions. He related that while Solimena was touching up a painting in the church of Giesù Vecchio the scaffolding collapsed killing one of his assistants and injured several bystanders. Just as reading a book was not an abstract activity between reader and author but an encounter produced by a community of interrelationships, artistic products in a significant way were not made by a single individual but involved associates including, among others, patrons, assistants and an actively observing, interested public.

³⁸ Nicola Maria Giannettasio, *Piscatoria et nautica* (Napoli, 1685). On the relationship of Solimena and Giannettasio, see Ferdinando Bologna, *Francesco Solimena* (Napoli, 1958), 67, 74, 181–2, 184, 187, and 205. Giannettasio published other works on local rivers, streams and the Bay of Naples; he was continuing the tradition of San-nazaro and of Virgil. He too should be added to those who influenced Vanvitelli's conception of the fountains at Caserta; see George Hersey, *Architecture, poetry, and number in the Royal Palace at Caserta* (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT Press, 1983), 15–24.

³⁹ Clovis Whitfield and Jane Martineau, *Painting in Naples 1606–1705 from Caravaggio to Giordano* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1982), pp. 247–48.

San Paolo Maggiore was one of the churches severely damaged in the 1688 earthquake. As part of its rebuilding, Solimena was hired to paint two immense frescoes in the Sacristy, "The Conversion of St. Paul" and "The Fall of Simon Magus" as well as smaller depictions of "Virtues". The two frescoes are regarded as the culmination of the first phase of Solimena's career.⁴⁰ The figure of Paul is present in both; Paul was of especial importance to the Theatines. He is the central figure in the "Conversion", and in the "Simon" he and Peter are portrayed praying for the fall of the blasphemer. Simon is the central figure and Solimena depicts a moment in his fall where from his face we see that Simon has realized his attempt to fly has failed. Simon Magus, the first heretic in the Catholic Church, was an apt contrast to Paul, the hammer of orthodoxy.

Besides the figure of Paul, the theme of blindness provides another link between the frescoes. Paul, of course, is the blinded figure in "The Conversion" as the light surrounding Christ knocks him from his horse. In the "Simon" work there is also a blind man, a nude figure who sits attentively in the foreground, looking at the viewer, waiting to hear what will result from Simon's attempt to fly. Bernardo De Dominici called special attention to this taut figure, alert to hear about the events which he cannot see.⁴¹ De Dominici calls the "Conversion" *bellissima* and he praises the *furia* of the horses fleeing the light which causes the Apostle to fall from his horse. With the "Simon" there is another fall, but in this onlookers of the *prodigioso spettacolo* are motionless sharing in Nero's *istupore*. The two compositions create their effect by use of the extremes of suspense and the inspiration, ecstasy, or *furor* that knock one out of one's senses. This juxtaposition in painting of *furor* and *istupore* serve as rhetorical tropes; they indicate the kind of psychological effects aimed at in the composition, at least as perceived by De Dominici. De Dominici praises the work's *diversità* and their *contraposti* (antitheses). The attentive viewer, like Nero in the painting, can only respond to these works with *stupore*. Nero's eyes and those of Simon's are at the same level; Solimena has caught that moment where they share each other's gaze. The viewer, however, does not share Simon's gaze, but, paradoxically, that of the blind man. The exaggeration and extremes create what

⁴⁰ Ferdinando Bologna, *Francesco Solimena*, pp. 72-74, figures 74-83.

⁴¹ Bernardo De Dominici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori, ed architetti napoletani* (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1742, Reprinted 1979) 3, 586.

to De Dominici's standard of taste was perfection. These values echo the effect that baroque political leaders of the late seventeenth century wished to achieve with their policies. The desire to achieve a master stroke that would astound the world still had vitality in the imagination and language of De Dominici in the 1740s.

CHAPTER TWO

THE INDEX AND THE ATOMISTS

The observation has frequently been made that censorship of intellectual life by religious institutions, especially by the Inquisition and the Index are important in making a fair evaluation of Neapolitan culture and scholarship in this period. To this a proviso should be added ones concerning state censorship as well as the influence and power of wealthy patrons. And it is well to remember that much the same constraints applied to most regions in Western Europe. The Netherlands was, in some measure, an exception as was England which had a relatively free press during the English Civil War and Commonwealth period, and after 1694 when the Licensing Act was not renewed. What is difficult to determine is what effect these constraints had on scholars. Toland chaffed under the comparative freedom of England and Holland; while Malebranche and Leibniz wrote what was on their mind in the more censorious states of France and the principalities in Germany. Being circumspect seems part of Locke's style and mind rather than something imposed upon him; Pufendorf, on the other hand, was direct and forthright in his expression.

At the end of the 1680s, Naples surpassed Rome as an intellectual center, especially with its accomplishments in the study of the natural sciences. But this relative superiority disappeared by the early 1690s, and the reason frequently given for this was an inquisitorial investigation concerning atheists in Naples.¹ The inference is made that this investigation had a chilling effect on those who had been interested in the natural sciences. This account may be more specious than true. To be sure it makes for an edifying story, or at least one appealing to academics who consider themselves advocates of the unorthodox and the free. Such an attitude is predisposed to account for the sudden disappearance of an interesting research program developing at a particular place because of oppression and obscurantism. The story of an independent minded individual being

¹ Hanns Gross, *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment: The Post-Tridentine syndrome and the ancien regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 252.

silenced by a social institution with vested interests in traditional values has the added pathos of sad familiarity. But there are many things that can derail an academic culture. Not all promising scientific investigations are successfully completed, nor do all cultural movements collapse due to institutional suppression. Sometimes those originally devoted to a problem get bored, become lazy, or give up because the difficulties seem too great. Despite the trail of circumstantial evidence, not every failed career or unpublished bit of research was rejected or unnoticed due to ideological hostility. How vital was Naples' intellectual preeminence in science in the late 1680s? Of Naples' leading scientists, Borelli and Cornelio were already dead, Di Capoa was old and had already published his major work, the only real successor to this tradition was Luc'Antonio Porzio who would not return to Naples until the middle 1690s. The younger generation interested in the natural sciences had almost all chosen a career path of the law and of public service. One may wonder whether this scientific community could have continued.

Without a doubt the intellectual productions of the Catholic world of this time must be understood as being created under the scrutiny of the Holy Office of the Inquisition and the Index. But what was the nature of that scrutiny and how did it affect scholars and their research? Our image of the Inquisition is shaped in unequal measure by Dostoevsky's "The Grand Inquisitor"; the Thought Police of *1984*; and by Monty Python. Suffice it to say that the historical institution differs from this image. The study of the inquisitions of the Catholic Church, especially the Spanish Inquisition, has been the subject of much recent scholarship. To repeat some of the major conclusions, it seems that in comparison with their secular counterparts the various ecclesiastical inquisitions executed fewer individuals, avoided using evidence obtained from torture contrary to the practice of most secular law enforcement professionals, and followed a judicial procedure that was generally more protective of the rights of the accused than civic tribunals. In the end this may not be saying a whole lot, though there may be cause for minor amazement when a law enforcing agency is not as brutal as it could be.

The Inquisition as a centralized institution controlling branches all over Europe simply never existed; it is a myth of the propaganda of certain Inquisitions as well as of their opponents. Inquisitions were local bodies with their own traditions and practices, yet, the word "local" can be misleading for some had an extensive jurisdiction.

The Spanish Inquisition is the most well known because of its creative use of baroque theatrical language and imagery; the Roman Inquisition has a less distinct identity but is notorious for burning Bruno and silencing Galileo. Naples had its own Inquisition too, and among its famous cases was the trial and imprisonment of Campanella in the early seventeenth century. We should beware of using the most notorious cases as representing the norms of their activities. As most administrators and some judges will tell you difficult cases do not yield model decisions and seldom do they reveal the way decisions are reached. We learn far more about the attitude and intentions of the Inquisition and its normal activities and aims from Ginzberg's account of Menocchio's trial and the Benandante than studies of the case of Bruno or Galileo. We need to better understand the meaning of the routine presence of the Inquisition for the majority of Catholic scholars engaged in non-theological research.

The Index of Prohibited Books could operate in conjunction with an Inquisition, but its usual operations were completely separate. It is true that in Spain the Inquisition prepared its own Index, but its authority was limited to the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition. Theological faculties such as the Sorbonne would sometimes evaluate books and doctrines as well. For Neapolitans it was the Roman Congregation of the Index which determined what could be read without worry of error.² The Congregation of the Index would routinely publish announcements on individual books that were banned, and, when appropriate, published comprehensive listings of all their condemnations. Considering their nominal job description, to evaluate any book or pamphlet published for the presence of heresy or traces of heresy, the Roman Index was woefully underfunded and understaffed. To best use its resources, the Index had to pick what it reviewed, and these choices tell a good deal as to what were deemed the most important threats to orthodox belief or dangerous to the harmonious unity of the Church. It was not until 1753 that Pope Benedict XIV promulgated regulations to make this procedure more rational and the procedure for selecting books for review less whimsical. Once having reached its decisions, the Index did not directly intervene in the book trade. The seizure of condemned books, con-

² On Naples' involvement with book censorship in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century see, Pasquale Lopez, *Inquisizione stampa e censura nel Regno di Napoli tra '500 e '600* (Napoli: Edizioni del Delfino, 1974).

trolling their importation and distribution, was primarily the job of other authorities. And, for an individual reader, it seems as if it was fairly simple to obtain the necessary dispensation from a confessor that was requisite for the legal reading or ownership of most condemned books.

The purpose of both the Inquisition and the Index was to repress certain opinions and behaviors. And if it befell that an individual or their work was scrutinized by these bodies it was far preferable to find one's book on the Index, than one's self in an Inquisitorial investigation. For the casual bystander it would be a hardened individual who didn't find the Inquisition's public ceremonies imposing and chilling. The average author, who avoided the topics of theology and church-state relations, need not expect to find their work on the Index. The orthodox general reader might well regard the publications of the Index as a useful guide to reading. Such a reader could use the list as a way of avoiding books that might be too challenging. For the thrill seeker, on the other hand, the list identified dangerous territory. For the specialist researcher such a list could provide a guideline of how to stay on the far right side of orthodoxy. Because of the increasingly technical nature of all learning it was impossible for most scholars to keep up with their own fields as well as developments in theology. The Index could serve as a handy guideline of possible theological pitfalls and mark out mistakes made in books in fields related to one's own. Furthermore such a list could guide a Catholic scholar interested in reading something outside their area of expertise. From this perspective, and without too much exaggeration we might regard the Index as a rather energetic and pro-active form of peer review. The Index was generally unable to prevent publication and the initial distribution of a book, but they could blacklist it.

In some cases the Index might deal rapidly with a book after publication, others took years before they were fully evaluated. For the Neapolitan reader it might be of interest to know that Burnet's *The History of the Reformation of the Church of England* was added to the Index in October of 1688, the *Travels*, however, remained acceptable reading. Bayle's journal, *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* was added in November of 1689 along with a number of works of Nicholas Malebranche. Condemnation of the *Acta Eruditorum* didn't begin until 1702, though starting at that point all issues were censored. And, it is worth remembering that Spinoza's *Ethics* which first appeared in the author's *Opus posthuma* wasn't included until 1690, 13 years after

its publication. Spinoza was not listed by name in the Index but the work was listed under “B.D.S.”; that is how the author was named on the book’s title page. This kind of literalism is important in understanding the print culture of this era: in its own way The Index was very scrupulous on matters of bibliographic description and publishing history. Hobbes’ *Leviathan* waited until 1703 to join this company, more than 50 years after its initial publication. And to turn to Neapolitan publications of the period, while Leonardo di Capoa’s *Parere* was added to the Index in August of 1693, by far the greater number of authors, Neapolitan and elsewhere, included on the list were clerics who wrote on topics of religious practice or religious biography.³ Typical might be the case of Pietro Gisolfo of the Order of the Pious Workers who did important missionary work in southern Italy. A couple of weeks after his death in 1683 his famous *La guida de’ peccatori* (A guide for sinners) was put on the Index because of some too literal interpretations of the joys of heaven. A revision made it possible to issue subsequent editions.⁴ Nicolò Carminio Falcone managed to get on the Index for errors in his life of Naples’ patron saint, San Gennaro. Falcone was one of the few Neapolitans who learned Mabillon’s methods, collaborated with Muratori on the edition of a text in the *Rerum scriptores Italicarum*, and, in 1724 published an edition of Cassius Dio in Rome.

The Inquisitorial Investigation of the Atomists

While the Index was an ongoing operation and frequently backlogged with the number of books to be reviewed, an Inquisition was dependent on informants in order to begin an investigation. Hence, when, on March 21, 1688, a lawyer, Francesco Paolo Manuzzi, appeared in Naples before Giuseppe Nicola Giberti, Bishop of Teano, he opened

³ Carlo Casalicchio, a Neapolitan Jesuit of the second half of the seventeenth century wrote a very popular spiritual guide, *L’utile col dolce*, which was reprinted through the middle of the eighteenth century, but managed to offend with a work on moral theology; Claudio Mutini, “Casalicchio, Carlo” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 21, 116–117. For a typical case of the previous century, Alain Boureau, “Franciscan piety and voracity: uses and stratagems in the hagiographic pamphlet”, in *The culture of print: power and the uses of print in early modern Europe*, ed. Roger Chartier, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 20–39.

⁴ Gabriele De Rosa, *Vescovi popolo e magia nel Sud: ricerche di storia socio-religiosa dal XVII al XIX secolo*, 2nd edition (Napoli: Guida, 1983), p. 197.

a window of opportunity for this Inquisitor. Manuzzi explained that for the past year or so he had been involved with a crowd who regarded Christ as an imposter, mocked the sacraments and the temporal authority claimed by the Church, and considered the creation story of Genesis as a pious fraud.⁵ The most serious personal accusations were directed against two lawyers Giacinto de Cristofaro and Basilio Giannelli. Giberti seemed to have moved the case right along and may have been ready to make some arrests, but the earthquake in June intervened. A decision was taken to call in Manuzzi again, and, on June 17, Manuzzi brought Giberti up to date on what he had seen since March. This time his testimony had some prurient matter to report. Not only had he noted Giannelli disporting himself in an unbecoming way in Church, talking, being disrespectful of the divine service, Giannelli had introduced him to Francesco Sterlich. Sterlich's uncle had played an important role in the revolution of Masienello; nevertheless in January of 1689 Sterlich was slated to be appointed a judge of criminal cases in Naples. Manuzzi portrays Sterlich as misbehaving in church, and added that on one day in Carnival season, he had sexually accosted a boy in Giesù Nuovo, but had been turned down. Manuzzi mentions that Cristofaro and Giannelli talked to him of heretical ideas they had learned from books, but they mentioned no specific titles. Cornelio's *Opera quaedam posthuma* had been published that April; but Manuzzi apparently knew nothing of it, at least he did not discuss it. This kind of linking of sexual deviance, blasphemy and materialism was just the kind of accusation the Inquisitors were ready to deal with.⁶ Sterlich, perhaps because of his judicial position, was not subjected to an inquisitorial investigation.

Despite this evidence, for reasons that aren't clear, no action was

⁵ Luciano Osbat, *L'Inquisizione a Napoli: Il processo agli ateisti, 1688-1697* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1974), pp. 255-57. Osbat has published some of the documentation of the proceedings. The traditional interpretation of this event has been to view it as an attempt by the Church to crush the followers of Descartes and Gassendi in Naples; this is best represented by Luigi Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio della Inquisizione in Napoli* (Città di Castello, 1892). Osbat challenges this view seeing the process as part of the on-going conflict of the older nobility against the growing power of the lawyers allied to the Viceregal government. See also, Romano Canosa, *Storia dell'inquisizione in Italia*, 5, 95-106, 119-132; he includes lengthy quotations from manuscript material.

⁶ Alan Charles Kors, *Atheism in France, 1650-1729, vol. 1: The Orthodox Sources of Disbelief* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 1, 18-42, gives an account of this traditional portrait from the French perspective.

taken until the summer of 1691; indeed, Giberti waited until July 13, the day after Antonio Pignatelli, the Cardinal and Archbishop of Naples, had been elected Pope, and had taken the name of Innocent XII.⁷ The picture that the Inquisitors had constructed was complex but lacked clear-cut proof. Manuzzi remembered a meeting at the house of Aniello di Napoli, to whom Raillard had dedicated a volume of the Redi and later the *Saggi*. There Nicola Galizia, who had a reputation for his knowledge of mathematics and canon law, and who was to be a friend of Vico's, explained the atomic hypothesis using the works of Gassendi and Descartes for examples. There was also a significant interest among those who gathered at his home in Lucretius' poem *De rerum natura*. After the renewal of the investigation, on August 12, Cristofaro was arrested. As news spread of this event individuals came on their own to give testimony. The most interesting evidence in terms of Naples' intellectual life comes from the cleric Paolo d'Acunto. He recalled a heated conversation with Cristofaro a few years back that had taken place in a bookstore, but he couldn't remember which one. The subject had concerned the theory of atoms and other beliefs of the materialists, and he remembered that he had challenged Cristofaro for irreligious views.⁸ Significant discussion of new ideas took place not only in private homes, but one could expect to find discussions of this type in bookstores as well. And a parish priest would engage in so many that it was difficult to remember specific details.

Other suspects were arrested after Cristofaro; Giannelli and Manuzzi were actually imprisoned in 1692 while travelling on public business in Spain. Cristofaro, on his arrest, was taken to a prison in San Domenico Maggiore rather than the prison of the Archbishop. This proved to be one of the most controversial aspects of this incident; it resulted in the expulsion of Giberti from Naples; a major solicitation of legal opinions on the issue of inquisitorial rights and privileges in the Kingdom; and the threat that Naples would be placed under a Papal interdict. The significance behind Cristofaro's place of arrest was that it meant that Giberti was intending to try the case in

⁷ L. Oshat, *L'Inquisizione a Napoli*, p. 90. On Pignatelli's continued relations with Naples in this period and the appointment of Cantelmo as his successor, see Giacomo Garzya, "Reclutamento e sacerdotalizzazione del clero secolare della diocesi di Napoli. Dinamica di una politica pastorale nella seconda metà del Seicento" in *Per la storia sociale e religiosa dell'Mezzogiorno d'Italia*, 2 v. (Napoli: Guida, 1980), 2, 99.

⁸ L. Oshat, *L'Inquisizione a Napoli*, p. 94.

his own Inquisitorial Court rather than that of Naples' own bishop whose court was authorized by the state. Giberti's court could be seen as a direct challenge to the Viceregal authority since it had not given Giberti permission to hear cases. The question of who had the authority to administer justice, establish courts, and determine the jurisdictions of various courts was a focal concern of the early modern state. And the Kingdom of Naples was certainly typical in that its administration was composed of confused, often contradictory rights, privileges, exemptions, and duties claimed by the central state, ecclesiastical bodies, the barons, and other local governing bodies—a Paradise for lawyers and a Tartarus for clients.

The hubbub created by Giberti's arrest of Cristofaro had much notoriety. Neapolitans knew that in the sixteenth century there had been three major revolts in which Spain had all but lost control of Naples. Each had been occasioned by the monarch's attempt to introduce an Inquisition on the Spanish model. Furthermore, Masiello's Revolution was another sign of creative political possibilities available to urban revolutionaries. The more recent revolt of nearby Messina was another reminder. It is not surprising that the Spanish viceroy saw a need to proceed decisively to prevent another civil disturbance. There was no revolt, but why was that? This was not simply a Neapolitan phenomena; throughout Europe in the 1680s and 90s events and opportunities that created civil wars and riots in the 1640s and 50s resulted in reconciliation and consolidation. Popular revolution during these years was not the way urban dwellers expressed their hostility to their rulers. The Spanish viceroy, not knowing he lived in the age of bloodless revolutions, acted promptly to control this new direction of the Inquisition.⁹ Confuorto, in his diary, recounted several instances of public outcry in the months of August and September of 1691. The Viceroy, Francesco Benavides, conte di San Estevan, was determined to protest Giberti's action and among his first steps was a solicitation of opinion on this matter from the lawyers of the Kingdom. It is useful to consider the formative political experiences and traditions shared by Naples' lawyers to understand their responses to the Viceroy's request for their views on the Inquisition's investigation. The most important was their experience of the Spanish imperial system.

⁹ Theodore K. Rabb, *The struggle for stability in early modern Europe* (Oxford: University Press, 1975), 148–151.

They believed in the ideals of *buon governo*. Despite the fact of foreign rule, Naples' status was not that of a colony, in theory it was a part of the crown of Spain in the same way that Castille or Aragon were. Naples' most recent, shaping political event was the viceroy's decision to revalue and mint the Kingdoms' currency, and, in particular, the way in which that decision was executed. The process had begun in 1683 when the then viceroy, Marchese del Carpio lay the ground work for the new coinage. Instead of being a temporary expedient, this act was seen as a complete solution; its aim was to transform the entire basis of the economy. It was *grand'opera*, a great work, grand opera, Baroque style.¹⁰ A successful baroque reform or revolution would bring relief to citizens, restore respect of foreigners for the Kingdom's currency, and it would return products to their "just price". It was believed that if items were returned to their "just price", then the economy of the entire society would prosper. The government's recoinage policy resulted in a devaluation of the currency by some 30%. It helped stabilize the flow of silver out of the Kingdom and supported the gradual economic recovery of the last years of the rule of the Spanish Hapsburgs.¹¹

In 1689, in conjunction with the recoinage, Giacomo Raillard published the *Ritus regiae camerae summariae regni Neapolis* which printed the regulations of Naples' most important financial body. This may be seen as a continuation of another work of administrative law which he printed in 1688, the *Novissimae pragmaticae*, which contained all new edicts promulgated since 1682. Both works represent the new alliance which had developed between the viceregal administration and a group of the Kingdom's lawyers. The linking began in the wake of revolution of Masienello; the Kingdom's underemployed lawyers had played a key role in the revolt. In their return to power, the Spaniards sought new ways and new allies to support their authority and one of them were certain groups of lawyers. This body of lawyers is referred to as the *ceto civile*, "the civic group" or less literally "the public interest". They were distinguished from the lawyers who worked for the barons and other local interests. When the

¹⁰ Perhaps the last expression of this baroque ideal of a total social transformation by deliberate action is its comic parody in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, in Basilio's "La calunnia" aria.

¹¹ Luigi De Rosa, *Il Mezzogiorno spagnolo tra crescita e decadenza*, (Milano: Mondadori, 1987), pp. 220-229. Ruggiero Romano, *Napoli: dal Vicereame al Regno, storia economica* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976), 56-59, 254-55.

Viceroy, therefore, sought advice on the role of the Inquisition, many lawyers saw this in the same light as the recoinage issue: it was an opportunity to alter and remake a fundamental element of the Kingdom, in this case relations between the Kingdom and Rome. Furthermore, it could provide a new way for the state to direct and control those forces acting on its people.

In the terminology of the day it was understood that there were two distinct ways or procedures that could be followed in an inquisitorial investigation: the *via ordinaria* and the *via straordinaria*. The first referred to the Bishop's Inquisitorial Court, its procedures allowed the accused to know the charge and directly face the accuser or accusers. The second, the *via straordinaria*, by-passed the local court and followed a procedure that did not reveal the accuser or specify any criminal charge to the accused.¹² This insistence on not explaining the purpose of the investigation and its anonymity added to the terror of this tribunal. The aim of this was to enable the Inquisitors to identify truthful testimony from that given by individuals attempting to manipulate the Court. The *via straordinaria* had been developed specifically to identify and extirpate heresy. In both cases the accuser and the accused had access to legal counsel. The entire proceedings were kept secret; in this the Inquisition was extremely effective. While there was a great deal of conversation about those arrested, contemporaries simply didn't seem to know what had happened. Twenty-five years later when Pietro Giannone described the event in his *Istoria civile del Regno di Napoli*, he did not distinguish accusers from the accused. A clear memory of the identity of Manuzzi disappeared, for he calls him "Menuzio", and gives as his forename "Giovanni Battista" instead of Francesco Paolo; he was described among the victims rather than as an accuser.¹³

In Naples there was a general agreement about the course of the history of Naples and the Inquisition. Prior to the sixteenth century Naples had been the scene of tribunals following both Inquisitorial procedures. But, when Naples' new ruler, Ferdinand of Aragon, in 1508 attempted to establish a court following the model with which

¹² The metaphor of two *viae* was common enough in Naples. Vico used similar terms in his 1725 *Scienza nuova* to distinguish the chosen *via* of the Hebrews from the *via ordinaria* of the Gentiles. Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, p. 190 (*Scienza nuova*, 1725, Book 2, chap. 4).

¹³ Pietro Giannone, *Istoria civile del Regno di Napoli*, ed. Antonio Marongiu (Milano: Marzorati, 1971) vol. 6, 76 (Book 32, chap. 5, sec. 3).

he was familiar, the Spanish Inquisition, the city of Naples was convulsed by violent riots. Ferdinand laid aside this plan; it was taken up by his successor Charles V in 1546 with the same result. On this occasion the Spanish lost control of the city and their soldiers fled to the castles from which they bombarded Naples. Again in 1565 Charles' son Philip II made a similar attempt followed by the same tumultuous response. To pacify the city Philip issued a letter promising not to make the attempt again, guaranteeing that the only procedure to be followed was what had been done in the past. But what did this promise mean in 1688? To Bishop Giberti what it meant was that no inquisition on the Spanish model was to be introduced into Naples. With that he had no quarrel, but he was a Roman inquisitor in Naples, and both before and after Philip's letter, Roman inquisitors had held office in the Kingdom, or so his supporters claimed. His court was no innovation; it was an accepted part of ecclesiastical practice and jurisdiction. His opponents argued that the agreement with Phillip had specifically banned the procedure adopted by Giberti. Whatever the rights of the situation there was some fear that Giberti's decision might well bring about the kinds of violence witnessed in the previous century. The Viceroy was faced by a dilemma; it seemed that Giberti's action was a violation of the authority of Spain; but there was also the danger of antagonizing the leaders of the Church, and, worse, the new pope was all too familiar with Naples.

A Legal Debate in Manuscript

The Viceroy decided to expel Giberti from the Kingdom and to move the prisoners from San Domenico Maggiore to the Archbishop's prison. He did this under the advice of the Collateral Council, the most authoritative legal body of the Kingdom. This was done in conjunction with his decision to solicit the opinions of the most prestigious Neapolitan jurists on this matter. These writings have been preserved in several manuscript volumes. The principle of arrangement is not obvious, nor is it clear how anyone might have used them for reference. Frequently there are several briefs by the same author, not gathered in the same volume. The comparison of some of the texts indicates that these were usually not exact copies, even those with the same title. Perhaps they were drafts, although the reason for collecting them escapes me, and presumably there were

financial rewards involved for these different versions. Most of the documents are not dated and for some no authorship is attributed. The briefs vary in length, most are a few pages, a few go to almost 300. While the collection of papers seems to cover a full range of opinions, the majority supported the position that the Roman Inquisition had no place in Naples. Despite the number of manuscripts and the obvious interest shown by Naples' lawyers none of the briefs appeared in print at this time. We can't presume that it was professional modesty that prevented this; it is possible that they were accessible to anyone who wanted or needed to see them. The only one to appear in print, as far as I am aware, was the *Ragioni a pro della fedelissima Città e Regno di Napoli contr'al procedimento straordinario nelle cause del Sant'Officio* (Rights on behalf of the City and Kingdom of Naples against the extraordinary procedure in the case by the Holy Office) of Nicolò Caravita. It was published in 1709 at the time of another conflict with Rome, and in February of 1710 was added to the Index: a not unusual fate for his books.

This manuscript collection provides an overview of the political vocabulary of Naples' leading legal authorities in the early 1690s. The language of the two *viae* or ways has the air of the classic Stoic example of Hercules at the crossroads. Many of the briefs portrayed one of these ways as a path to vice, the other the one of civic virtue. The central issue in them was what was the best way to preserve civil harmony, and, specifically, when dealing with heresy, does a procedure like the *via straordinaria* cause more trouble than the evil it is trying to destroy? Almost all the authors discuss the historical background, especially the letter of Philip II; they accept the principle that religious uniformity and orthodoxy are the sign of a virtuous city; and, a number of authors discuss the *via straordinaria* in terms of the principles of natural law. Atypical of this controversy was the scholastic argument which began "There are two principle ways in which a created being can rebel against God".¹⁴ In general, the terms of the argument were accepted by both sides—the controversy concerned matters of fact, precedents, and what was right and good, not the terms of logic or the definitions of theology.

The defenders of Giberti's choice of the *via straordinaria* emphasized the benefits of religious uniformity and the manifest evils of

¹⁴ BSNP (Biblioteca della Società Napolitana di Storia Patria) MSS XXIII D 6, l. 114r "Discursus scholasticus".

heresy. They willingly granted that the Spanish Inquisition had no traditional role in the Kingdom of Naples, but Rome, they claimed, had always had inquisitors in Naples. Unlike the Spanish method which was brutal, harsh, and unsuited to the Neapolitan character, the Roman inquisitors had exercised their office with prudence, flexibility and efficiency. Hence there was no need for the special royal approval or *exequator* because the Roman inquisitors had always possessed this authority.¹⁵ The anti-Spanish tone of this argument indicates the deep-seated hostility to their influence in Italy. And it indicates the common acceptance of the caricature of the Spanish Inquisition promoted by both it and its enemies. Furthermore, it was argued, there were special advantages in this Roman court. Because the judges were removed from the local circumstances they were less liable to corruption. The secrecy of the proceedings would protect the accused as well as aid the Court's attempt to distinguish fact from calumny. The argument for the need of this tribunal was two-fold: first it was not an innovation; secondly, heresy was such an evil power and capable of spreading incredibly fast, and any action to check it was justified. The second argument, it would seem, might make the first superfluous. Some briefs focused on the need for a no holds barred contest with heresy. Torture, this view noted, was part of ordinary proceedings, in fact any proceeding against heretics could be justified.¹⁶

The arguments of Amato Danio, a lawyer, provide an interesting parallel to this position and a slight twist in his argument allows him to reach an opposite conclusion.¹⁷ He was convinced that everything must be done to extirpate heresy because of its destabilizing potential for a community. He also recognized, however, that the revolts against the harshness of the Spanish Inquisition in Flanders and in Naples in the sixteenth century were just as damaging to their communities. An investigation against heresy has to proceed in a politically correct fashion which means acting with moderation as well.¹⁸

¹⁵ BNN (Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli) MSS XI E 15, l. 132r, "Si dimostra quanti sia non solo convenevole ma anche diserbare che nella Città di Napoli si mantegna l'autorità di Ministro Generale del S. Officio dell'Inquisizione, distinto dall'ordinario dell'Arcivescovo".

¹⁶ BNN MSS XI C 1, ll. 32r-64r.

¹⁷ Danio, a lawyer, was also interested in the history of his native Lucania and had translated into Italian the relevant parts of Strabo—the manuscript is now lost; Cinzia Cassani, "Danio, Amato", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 32, 611-613.

¹⁸ BNN MSS XI C 67, l. 4r. BNN MSS XV B 1, ll. 78r-80r. Amato Danio,

The Inquisition should not proceed in an uncompromising manner, but should act with charity and caution. In one version of his argument he stated because these inquisitors have not acted with moderation in the past, he advised their removal and preferred a reliance on the Bishop's court. Danio argued that the introduction of this Court was dangerous and a threat to royal rights and the citizens of the Kingdom. In another version he takes a slightly different tack and concludes the opposite: that because the Roman Inquisitors had behaved with moderation their responsible behavior should be rewarded with the granting of royal permission for their investigation. His support of both sides did not preclude an underlying continuity in his position. In both cases he emphasized the importance of the royal *exequator* to deny or approve; even if the Inquisition behaved with moderation, the symbol of sovereign power was needed to make it legally right. What was necessary was that there be trust between the people, their Inquisition and sovereign; the breakdown of this trust had caused disaster in the Netherlands. Danio wanted to prevent such a result in Naples. The ultimate jurisdiction over the special courts of the Church remained with the authority of the king. Danio was to develop a similar position in his 1703 argument concerning the investiture of Philip V, to which we will return later.

Serafino Biscardi, another prominent lawyer, developed a less ambiguous position than that of Danio. On July 18 of 1692 in relation to the activity of the Inquisition, Biscardi wrote against ecclesiastical revenues leaving the Kingdom. He also submitted papers on the Inquisition; like Danio he outlined the history of the two *viae*, tracing the *ordinaria* to the judicial practice of the Hebrews and the Athenians. The *straordinaria* was first used by the Romans in their handling of the so-called Conspiracy of the Bacchanalians. While Danio dwelt on the evils of heresy for a community, Biscardi saw the secrecy of the *via straordinaria* as the great destroyer of cities. No one was safe from a potential accuser, and Inquisitors would countenance accusations against anyone, even when made by members of the lowest social class. He referred to cases where inquisitors condemned the innocent who, it was later discovered, were victims of slander. Such cases undermine the trust needed for such an institution like the Inquisition to operate effectively. He cited the tradition

"Memoriale della Città di Napoli alla Maesta Cattolica di Carlo II Re di Spagna per togliere l'inquisizione del Sant'Ufficio".

that Naples received the Gospel in 44 AD when St. Peter arrived there on his way to Rome, and that Naples had been an adherent of the faith ever since. (It should be noted that this tradition carried the implicit message that Naples got the Christian faith before Rome). Along with their natural piety he noted a less attractive Neapolitan trait: their proneness to calumny and to bearing false witness. Perhaps not the best traits for a pious people, one might think, but there you have it. This defect made the Neapolitans particularly unsuited for the kind of procedures followed by the *via straordinaria*.

His subsequent account of the history of the *via straordinaria* was grounded in appeals to fact and documents. Among the sources he cites in his 1693 brief was Naples' great sixteenth historian Summonte.¹⁹ The second volume of Summonte's history had only just appeared in 1685; on April 21, 1693 the Index listed it among the works it condemned until corrected—presumably Biscardi got his citation in just under the wire. He goes on to argue that the list of Roman inquisitors provided by the defenders of Giberti simply did not possess any weight. These so-called representatives of Rome did not have the powers and authority that was claimed for them. Biscardi concludes this argument noting that only the *ordinaria* was in keeping with Naples' religious and legal traditions. And while he asserted that this method was in accord with reason, he did not base his argument on such an abstract principle. As he saw it, Neapolitans were loyal Catholics by nature. Because of their innate piety the prospect of rampant heresy was a non-question. But, if there should be some problems with orthodoxy, the *via ordinaria*, the traditional way of investigating heresy should be followed, as anything else would stimulate the Neapolitans' propensity for gossip and calumny. Thus, while Biscardi suggested that the *via straordinaria* was wrong for Naples, he did not generalize this to a broader condemnation. His argument, unlike Danio's, did not rely as much on the authority of the sovereign.

The brief that focused most directly on the issue of sovereignty and the rights of the state was that of Nicola Caravita.²⁰ He saw the

¹⁹ BNN MSS XI C 1, ll. 1r–30r; BNN MSS XV B 3, ll. 3v–54v; 55r–113v. Serafino Biscardi, “Discorso per la Città e Regno di Napoli che nelle cause del Santo Officio s’abbia a procedere per la via ordinaria secondo le lettere del Re Filippo Secondo, Anno 1693”. BNN MSS XV B 3, ll. 111r–162r. Serafino Biscardi, “Risposta alle scritture e motivi venuti da Roma”.

²⁰ Salvatore Fodale, “Caravita, Nicolò” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 19, 676–679.

preservation of the civil peace as the duty of the state; any religious courts that operate in a kingdom must serve that end and have the prior consent of the ruler to operate there. Because the sovereign's power comes from God, no one, not even an ecclesiastic, could take away that power. He gave as an example the case where a Pope proclaims a Jubilee encouraging the unrestricted travel of Christians to Rome; but, a sovereign knowing, for example, that a plague was coming, could forbid his subjects to travel and not permit foreigners to enter his land in order to control the spread of the disease. He saw sovereignty as embedded in the commonwealth and described their relation as inseparable as the soul is from its living body.²¹ He is perhaps echoing Hobbes' metaphor of sovereignty as "an artificial soul, as giving life and motion to the whole body."

Caravita, of course, agreed that heretics should be punished but disagreed with the procedures of the *via straordinaria*. In the case of Naples, the ordinary procedure was the one allowed by the sovereign. Like Biscardi, he did make some arguments against the procedures of the *via straordinaria* believing it prone to errors and to lack the basic principles of Christian charity. And while he seemed inclined to simply condemn it as wrong, he hedged his critique and fell back on a more generic and hence safer condemnation. He faulted it as violating the whole range of laws: divine, natural, human, canon and customary. Unlike the previous authors, he mentioned the specific beliefs that the accused were suspected of holding. The only so-called heresy involved, in his view, was that of studying mathematics and thinking that Aristotle was fallible.

Giuseppe Valletta, the owner of the library visited by Burnet and Mabillon, wrote the most radical of these legal briefs. He was more cynical about the trust argument; he admitted that the Roman Inquisition had had a presence based on collusion with the Spanish viceroy and a tacit agreement that its operation would be low key. Not only does he repeat the historical arguments used by everyone, he argued that the procedures of the *via straordinaria* were contrary to natural law as that term was understood by Grotius, for example. In his use of natural law, he moved away from the vocabulary of trust

²¹ Nicolò Caravita, *Ragioni a pro della fedellissima Città e Regno di Napoli* (Napoli: Giovanni Acampora, 1709), p. 48. Here and in "Discorso contro l'editto" BNN MSS XV B 2, l. 94v, he uses "la Real giurisdizione, e'l commune di questo città"; in "Discorso contro l'editto" BNN MSS XI C 1, l. 162v, "la Real giurisdizione, e'l publico di questo città".

used by the other writers. He modified and softened this claim by supplementing it with the theory that the bodily nature of southern races is more soft and delicate than their northern counterparts. In consequence a harsher legal process may be needed north of the Alps, and this apparently included Spain. Despite this prudent reservation he makes clear that he regarded the use of torture and the death penalty as not in accord with Christian charity. Citing a respected authority, he quotes that it is better to free a hundred guilty heretics than to condemn one innocent. He considered it an absolute right of an accused to know their accuser and their presumed crime: "no pontiff (I express this in full reverence) is able to take this away".²² While Caravita sought to limit ecclesiastical power by royal authority, Valletta did this in the name of natural law. The primary authority behind his conception of natural law was Grotius and the claim that natural law was a consequence of human rationality, an immutable law that was independent of revealed Scripture.

Valletta's manuscripts on the issue of the Inquisition are unusual in contrast to the others by their length; each version is around 200 manuscript leaves. This can be explained by his special commission from the Viceroy to prepare a statement to be submitted to the Pope. As one might expect from the owner of an impressive library his citations are wide ranging, including a number of contemporary writers from France and the Netherlands. There is even a quotation in English from Thomas Smith's *History of England*. The manuscript itself is elegantly presented using red and black inks, the red to highlight certain special quotations. Whether the letter was actually sent to the Pope is not clear.

Valletta also directly addresses the concern that the real motive of the Inquisitorial investigation was not atheism or sacrilege but to attack those pursuing the experimental methods and philosophy of Descartes and Gassendi, and for daring to disagree with Aristotle. In terms of Valletta's own development it is this issue, defending the modern critics of Aristotle, that becomes his major interest; this topic led him to justify their work by his study of the history of philosophy. The spectre that Valletta evoked at the end of his *Lettere* is not

²² BNN MSS XI C 10, ll. 58v–59r; BNN MSS XV B 4, l. 52r. Giuseppe Valletta, "Al nostro Santissimo Padre Innocentio Duodecimo intorno al procedimento ordinario e canonica nelle cause che si trattone nel tribunale del S. Officio nella Città e nel Regno di Napoli".

the spread of heresy, or the backstabbing of the calumniators. Instead, he feared that if this Inquisition was given permission to operate in Naples, the Protestant book review journals would rise up and lord it over the Catholics, ridiculing them because even the most pious city of Naples was infected with heresy. Valletta's assertion, though charming, is not evidence that learned journals had a moderating influence on human rights violations at this time. Valletta's claim for their influence indicated the important role the journals exercised as arbiters of praise and blame for scholars in Naples. Furthermore, these journals, in his view, had created an open forum or public arena where ideas could be openly evaluated and judged. Valletta believed that this same kind of freedom of investigation should be permitted in any scientific investigation.

The writings of these jurists on the legality of the *via straordinaria* in Naples showed a range of distinctive approaches. This selection emphasized a shift from arguments based on practical politics to more abstract claims made for sovereignty and natural law. The idea of trust between Church and State as necessary for a well-ordered society was important to most of these views. The concept of "trust" or "faith" had the status of a legal category for jurists of feudal law, *jus feudale*. The links between feudal law and moral philosophy were strong.²³ For some, the trust had to be based on some very concrete behaviors of inquisitors and rulers; for a few, this trust could be traced to principles of natural law.²⁴ These briefs on the Inquisition define the political discourse in Naples for the early eighteenth century. It is within this theoretical framework that we can understand the approaches of Doria, Giannone and Vico. The other lesson implicit from this survey of legal opinion was the need for a re-evaluation of Naples' history; fundamental questions about tradition and sovereignty and the relation of the Papacy and the Kingdom were unclear and disputed. Naples' political identity lacked clarity; and, of crucial

²³ Donald R. Kelley, *The Human measure: social thought in the western legal tradition*, 96–99 and 121–127.

²⁴ In this regard consider the important chapter, "*Fede Pubblica and Fede Privata*" (chapter 3) in Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination: Studies in European and Spanish-American Social and Political Theory, 1513–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 65–90. Pagden considers the issue of trust in the thought of Paolo Mattia Doria and Antonio Genovesi. While I agree with his analysis, I am arguing here that the essentials of their views on the role of trust in holding a society together are, in large measure, present in these writings of the early 1690s.

importance was to learn whether *buon governo* ever had existed, and if so could any of its principles be recreated?

This encounter with the Inquisition was invigorating for political ideas but what was its effect on the study of the natural sciences and those accused of atheism? It is true that after this encounter with the Inquisition, except for a few outstanding cases, Naples does not continue its role as an important center for research in the natural sciences. As I mentioned, the leading Neapolitan scientist who was engaged in ongoing research was Luc'Antonio Porzio, and he was pursuing his career at Florence and Rome at this time, though he returned to Naples in 1693. The leaders of the *Investiganti* tradition were old or dead; the most original scientific research of the next decades was to be in mathematics, especially geometry. Cristofaro was a major contributor to these studies. The direction pursued by the majority of Naples' publishing scholars was in the fields of history and specifically the legal relations of the Papacy to the Kingdom of Naples. Given that this had become a topic of public debate such an emphasis is not surprising. From this point of view the controversy over the "atheists", as it was called, can be seen as having a positive impact on the development of the Neapolitan intellectual community's attempt to define and pursue what most interested and troubled it.

If we look at the actual outcome of the incident, the only real convictions to result were unrelated to the Manuzzi accusations. They were of Giovanni de Magistris and Carlo Rosito. The central figure of this group was Rosito, a druggist, who would regularly meet with friends to discuss the hypothesis of atoms and other materialistic ideas in the bookshops of Bulifon and Porpora.²⁵ They were condemned to ten years in the galleys, but their sentences were much reduced. The primary suspects indicated by Manuzzi's testimony were Giacinto da Cristofaro who was around 40 (or perhaps about 25, his date of birth is a matter of controversy); Basilio Giannelli, a poet and lawyer of 28; and another lawyer Filippo Belli who was not yet 25. Did the Inquisition have an adverse effect on their intellectual development or careers?

²⁵ L. Osbat, *L'Inquisizione a Napoli*, pp. 192–94. According to Fausto Nicolini, *La Giovinezza di Giambattista Vico (1668–1700): saggio biografico*, 2nd ed. (Bari: Laterza, 1932), 82–3, patrons at Porpora's shop dressed in the French style and wore wigs in the fashion of Louis XIV. Valletta was the special patron of the shop, and it was known for its intellectual boldness.

Cristofaro, the primary suspect, remained in confinement from August 1691 until April of 1697. Gianelli and Belli were held for a much shorter period. None of them were condemned and Cristofaro was released with what could be called a stiff warning of not to appear to act like a free-thinker. From what we know of Giberti, he seems to have been a skilled inquisitor. That the results of the investigation were so meager may justify calling it a failure. We should not presume that Cristofaro was in fact guilty but got away; the legal process acquitted him and showed that those who pursued the new experimental methods and theories were not bad Catholics. But the most obvious question, if we presume the Inquisition was aiming to strike a blow against the atomists, was why they did not choose a more obvious or easier target. Given the result it may be safer to accept the investigation on its own terms and not see it as an organized strike against the supporters of the atomic hypothesis; rather, they were after atheists and didn't find them. The Inquisitorial search corroborates Burnet's conclusion that the people he met in Naples pursued problems and issues with a great deal of freedom supported by a fundamental piety. Luciano Osbat's recent conclusion that the legal process began from the ongoing conflict between the lawyers employed by the Viceroy and those in the service of the nobility of southern Italy may well be the most correct explanation of the entire affair. If the motive of the Inquisition was to crush the spread of the Modern philosophy in Naples, it failed.

While we lack the evidence to assess the impact of the investigation on Belli, we can better gauge its effect on Cristofaro and Gianelli. Prior to his imprisonment Cristofaro had published nothing, but after his release and abjuration on April 16, 1697 he published two mathematical works. *De constructione aequationum* of 1700 considered problems in the differential calculus. The *Acta Eruditorum* reviewed the work favorably; the author was probably Leibniz. In 1701 he corresponded with Domenico Guglielmini of Padua, who discovered that salts had distinct crystals, concerning the nature of the blood.²⁶ His most important work, *Della dottrina de' triangoli*, was printed in Venice in 1720.²⁷ It would seem Cristofaro had not changed his intellectual

²⁶ This correspondance was published in articles 12 and 13 of volume 4 of the *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici* (Venezia: Zane, 1730).

²⁷ Franco Palladino, "La geometria di Galilei e l'introduzione del calcolo a Napoli" in *Galileo e Napoli*, ed. Fabrizio Lomonaco and Maurizio Torrini (Napoli: Guida,

interests; in 1702 Cristofaro wrote to Magliabechi in Florence, requesting Descartes' *Opuscula posthuma physica et mathematica* published in Amsterdam in 1701. "Please pardon my eagerness", he writes, "it's just that these blessed foreign books take forever to get here".²⁸ He was an important friend of Vico and participated in the controversies occasioned by the mathematical theorizing of Paolo Mattia Doria.²⁹

For Basilio Giannelli (1662–1716) we have even more evidence. Although a lawyer, Giannelli's reputation was based primarily on his poetry. In 1687 he had published a poem commemorating the marriage of Tomasso d'Aquino, a patron of the new learning, to Fulvia Pico. This was followed in 1690 by a major collection of his poetry published by Giacomo Raillard. The famous sacred orator Emmanuele Cicerone provided an approval for the text. In it were poems dedicated to Cornelio and Di Capoa, as well as their friends such as Redi and Malpighi. There was also a canzone in praise of Mabillon and his Italian *Iter*. There were poems dedicated to Naples' leading jurists, including Biscardi, Caravita and Valletta (later he praised Danio); furthermore there are sonnets to his companions Cristofaro and Belli. His poetry was praised by no less than Vincenzo Maria Orsini, the Cardinal of Benevento and the future Benedict XIII. After his release from the Inquisition he continued to write. And he was commissioned in 1701 to celebrate the visit of Naples' new king Philip V; this was reviewed in issue 9 of the "1700" volume of the *Galleria di Minerva*.

But perhaps the most telling document concerning his state of mind is a manuscript autobiography he prepared in 1710 for his son Domenico. Autobiography was not an unknown form in Naples, but they tended to remain in manuscript. Francesco D'Andrea had prepared one for his son a decade or so earlier; this work may have served as a model for Giannelli, but the similarities do not argue decisively for influence. The D'Andrea autobiography was not published until 1923, while Giannelli's appeared in 1780. In his work Giannelli makes clear his complete adherence to the Cartesian

1987), 389–394; Augusto De Ferrari, "De Cristofaro, Giacinto" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* 1, 33, 586–589.

²⁸ *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*, p. 405.

²⁹ R. Gatto, G. Gerla, and F. Palladino, "Lettere di Giacinto de Cristofaro a Bernard Fontenelle e a Celestino Galiani", *Annali dell'Istituto e museo di storia della scienza di Firenze* (1984), 9, 67–93.

approach and his disdain for the writings of Aristotle and the obscurities generated by his followers. Furthermore he affirms his own orthodox sentiments; there is no indication that his experience with the Inquisition changed or altered any of his beliefs.³⁰ In the 1690s Giannelli became interested in history and planned to write a continuation of Guicciardini's *History of Italy*. The work was never published and no trace of it seems to remain. Nevertheless, the project itself pointed in the direction of the future. In this he was following the path of Giannestasio, the Jesuit poet/scientist of the 1680s and 90s who also turned his interests to a history of Naples.³¹ Giannelli seems to be among those who didn't make the transition to the patronage of the Austrians when they captured Naples in 1707. He died unexpectedly in 1716 when he was murdered by a servant who was attempting to rob him.

In the end, the controversy with the Inquisition and the trial of the Neapolitan atheists did not become a cause of scandal. Naples preserved its reputation as being a faithful and Catholic city. The writings on the rights of the Inquisition became one of the most important events in the development of the Neapolitan scholarly community of the late seventeenth century. Although these works stayed in manuscript, this did not mean that they were clandestine writings. In a limited sense they were public works, even though they were not published. In certain respects, because they were not printed, there was perhaps more freedom of discussion than in other, subsequent, controversies which took place in print. But none of this controversy was apparent outside the city; it remained a matter of local knowledge.

³⁰ BNN MSS I D 29, ll. 153r–156r, “Avvertimenti del Dr. Sig. Basilio Giannelli a Domenico Giannelli suo figlio” (106r–166v).

³¹ Giannestasio and Giannelli shift their interest from the natural sciences to history, and neither seemed aware of making a fundamental shift in their intellectual presuppositions. This contrasts with the picture Michael Hunter has given us of England where scholars worried about the contrasts and utility of these disciplines. Michael Hunter, *Science and Society in Restoration England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 157–160.

CHAPTER THREE

THE WAR BETWEEN THE ANCIENTS AND THE MODERNS: THE NEAPOLITAN FRONT

In 1694 two new works appeared which attacked the theories of the atomists and modern philosophy. One was by Giovanni Battista Benedetti, the *Lettere apologetiche in difesa della teologia scolastica e della filosofia peripatetica* (Apologetical Letters in Defense of Scholastic Theology and of Peripatetic Philosophy) written under the pseudonym of Benedetto Aletino. Its intended audience was not the specialist but the general reader. Benedetto Aletino was a pseudonym for Giovanni Battista Benedetti, the prefect of the Jesuit *Collegio* in Naples, who, as mentioned earlier, had published poetry and had just finished a massive work of Jesuit science and theology. His topic was to attack the critics of Aristotle, particularly those who accepted the approaches of Descartes and Gassendi. Giacomo Raillard, who had published Benedetti's previous works issued this one as well. The second book attacking the moderns was by Bernardo de Rojas, a Celestine, called *De formarum generatione contra atomistas* (On the generation of natural forms against the views of the atomists).¹ His work was published by Barba in Naples; his secular approver was Benedetti himself. And De Rojas had several laudatory citations to Benedetti's *Philosophia peripatetica* in his text. He also knew the scientific writing of his contemporaries; besides Descartes he had particular interest in the works of Du Hamel and that of Redi.² On occasion he will talk of experiments, but they do not appear to be a major part of his conception of scientific practice. Little is known of De Rojas; this work is additional proof of the sophisticated level of training among Naples' conservative clerics, the variety of their scientific publishing, and the vitality of clerical research.

It is not clear why Benedetti chose to publish under a pseudonym. Perhaps, because of his previous work and his position as the head

¹ Bernardo de Rojas, *De formarum generatione contra atomistas* (Napoli: Barba, 1694).

² Nicola Badaloni, *Introduzione a G.B. Vico* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1961), 118–119, suggests a relationship between DuHamel and Cornelio's thought. Perhaps de Rojas was using DuHamel as a way to attack Cornelio as well.

of the Jesuit *Collegio*, he thought potential readers might presume he would have nothing new to say. The initial impact of anonymity might give him a sales advantage and there was the fact that one of the letters was addressed to Leonardo di Capoa, whose *Parere* had been added to the Index in August of 1693. It should be noted that the publication of a book under a pseudonym, or false place of publication for that matter, was regarded as a deliberate subterfuge by the Roman Index. Still, Benedetti had obtained the requisite permissions for his book, his only infraction was to use a feigned name. The work was dedicated to Carlo Francesco Spinelli, the Prince of Tarsia; his wife, Giulia Spinelli, in 1689, had been a god-parent for Domenico Scarlatti's younger brother—another indication of the way patronage intersected between letters and the arts.

At one level we might see the *Lettere* as part of the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns begun in the late 1680s in Paris by Perrault, Basnage, Fontenelle, in England, Temple, Bentley and Wootton were among the leading controversialists.³ Benedetti has been seen as following the line taken by the Jesuit Gabriel Daniel's *Voyage du monde de Descartes* published in 1690 in Paris. Daniel's work was more a satire or fantasy than a critique. Benedetti's essay lacked the force of Pierre-Daniel Huet's 1689 *Censurae Philosophiae Castesianae* or the innovative critique found in Simon Foucher's numerous works arguing with Descartes and Malebranche.

The rhetoric of Ancients and Moderns, however, obscures what may more properly be called a conflict between aspects of the culture of the baroque. At least in Italy it is useful to think of the Jesuits as representing values and models developed in the early Baroque; Italian Cartesianism was a later reformulation of these values. The early baroque gained energy and direction following the defeat of the Turks at Lepanto in 1571. The late baroque gained momentum after the defeat of the Turks at the gates of Vienna in 1683. The intellectuals on both sides of the Quarrel needed a new self-definition. To advocate a return to Aristotle's forms did not disqualify a philosopher from being a Modern; consider the approach taken by Leibniz whose interpretation of Aristotle's entelechies or formative energies led him

³ Joseph M. Levine, "Giambattista Vico and the Quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1991, 52, 58–62. On the Quarrel in general see Joseph M. Levine, *The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

to propose the theory of kinetic and potential energy which became the foundation of the modern science of dynamics. To be a Cartesian pure and simple in the 1690s wasn't to be all that modern.

Another factor that should figure in assessing Benedetti's work was the general crisis which the Jesuit order was undergoing in the 1690s. The ethical teachings of the Jesuits, their advocacy of probabilism and casuistry, had brought on many reproaches from Pascal and the Jansenists, but of special concern was the charge that the order's moral teaching encouraged or at least rationalized lax morals. The General of the Order, Tirso Gonzalez, dismayed that no Jesuit had written against the evils in the probabilist teaching, decided to take on the task himself. Many Jesuits were appalled that their own General was about to publish a work that all but admitted that the Jansenists were right, that the Jesuits were teachers of a moral doctrine that lacked clear and absolute principles and which tolerated or excused sleazy behavior. Pressure was put on Pope Innocent to silence Gonzalez, lest he slander the Order. Gonzalez fought back and appealed for aid from Vienna and Madrid. In the spring of 1693 the Jesuits of the Province of Naples met and strongly supported the enemies of Gonzalez. Meanwhile Charles II of Spain voiced his support for Gonzalez, and, his ambassador in Rome, the Duke of Medina Coeli, promised to protect Gonzalez. And the Viceroy in Naples, Francesco Benavides, the Count of San Estevan, let his Jesuits know that the King supported Gonzalez. In the spring of 1694 Gonzalez' *Fundamentum Theologiae moralis id est Tractatus Theologicus de recto usu opinionum probabilium* was being read in Naples, and, perhaps Benedetti's work should be seen as an answer to it as well. Benedetti defended the teachings of probabilism in the *Lettere*, and given the clear views of the Spanish state supporting Gonzalez, he thought it advisable, given that his work could be seen as critical of Gonzalez, to cloak his identity under the name "Aletino". Benedetti's subsequent published writings continued this theme of defending Jesuit moral teachings; he translated and wrote works supporting casuistry and probabilist moral theory, and composed others which justified the methods and accomplishments of Jesuit missionaries in China.⁴

⁴ For this aspect of Benedetti's career see, Pasquale Sposato, *Le "lettere provinciali" di Biagio Pascal e la loro diffusione a Napoli durante la "rivoluzione intellettuale" della seconda metà del secolo XVII: Contributo alla storia Giansenismo e del giurisdizionalismo nel Regno di Napoli* (Tivoli: Aldo Chicca, 1960), 33-44.

For these reasons it may be misleading to see the *Lettere* as solely a work in the tradition of the quarrel between the ancients and the moderns. Benedetti knew that Gonzalez was an eclectic thinker who did not dismiss the atomic theory—Benedetti may also have intended to set his Order straight on what kind of physical theory was compatible with the theological and ethical teachings of the real Jesuits.

There has been a tendency to regard the *Lettere* as a continuation or part of the Inquisitorial investigation of the atomists. While it makes for a good symmetry to see the one as the public reenactment of the private investigation, the relation may be more specious than true. Benedetti wouldn't have needed any special instruction to write this work, it certainly follows the development of his intellectual concerns. As a Jesuit Benedetti would have had no part in the Inquisitorial proceedings, and the arguments of his book have scarcely any connection to the testimony that concerned the Inquisitors. And, as the event worked itself out Benedetti had more the role of the fall guy rather than of *eminence gris*.

Given the subsequent significance for Naples of the *Lettere* or at least the kinds of questions it raised, it is not irrelevant to include some of its arguments. The *Lettere* was composed of five letters, each addressed to a different person; four of these recipients were feigned names, the third letter, however, was directed to Leonardo di Capoa. The subject of the first letter was a defense of scholastic theology, the second concerned Aristotelian philosophy, the third was a critical evaluation of Cartesianism, the fourth letter compared the two systems, and the last described the dangers implicit in the theory of atoms and its relation to so-called free thought. Benedetti's primary concern was to explain the implications of anti-Aristotelian philosophies for Christian theology. Though he was an Aristotelian dogmatist, he was an interesting dogmatist. Benedetti's Aristotelian training is evident in his analysis of Descartes' philosophy; he is never far away from the question "To what end?" Benedetti believed that despite Descartes' apparent interest in metaphysics and theology, the consequence of his work was the trivialization of the fundamental concerns that lay at the heart of scholasticism. The traditional topics investigated by philosophy had concerned being and substance; Descartes' claim to have solved the substance problem with his mind/body split undercut attempts to continue this investigation.

Benedetti used the Cartesian analysis of perception to illustrate his point. Such an approach reduced vision to particles hitting a nerve,

but, he asked, how could such a claim account for the totality we experience with just a glance? To describe light and color as the result of pressure generated by tiny particles or corpuscles striking the optic nerve ignored the fundamental nature of visual perception. Mechanistic physics like that of Descartes' encouraged the investigator to only ask how something happened, not why or to what end. In consequence, the scientist who adopted Descartes' hypothetical method refused to wonder why something moved the way it did, and reasoned if things were supposed to be this way, then this explanation would be a sufficient reason to explain the results. Nature, instead of taking itself as a standard, must use artifice and unsupported hypotheses as its model for explanation.⁵

This kind of use of theory, as Benedetti saw it, fitted in with Descartes' criteria that truth must be a clear and distinct idea, needing nothing else to confirm it. Benedetti looked at Descartes' first principle and primary example of a clear and distinct idea, *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am), agreed with it, but saw no certainty in its consequences. One might as well say "I am hungry, therefore I eat"; for him this was a mere feeling of consciousness, not a kind of knowledge. Benedetti considers Don Quixote as the perfect Cartesian; he was someone who without any doubts acted on his own very clear and distinct principles. Given that imaginary concepts can have the same or even greater power than rational concepts, such subjective notions could not provide a standard for truth.

By making the *cogito* his first principle, Descartes was attempting to make the issue of how ideas were made or acquired the central concern of philosophic investigation. Benedetti contended that this meant destroying the soul as a matter of philosophic study and replacing it with a theory of consciousness. This approach attempted to remove vital and innate powers from living things. The very language preferred by the Cartesians, according to Benedetti, indicated this. Instead of speaking about appetites and passions, the Moderns preferred to describe the same phenomena as "modifications of affections". The older vocabulary suggested that emotions could arise spontaneously rather than be reactions to another kind of stimuli—the second view would suit the mechanistic model favored by Cartesians.

Benedetti believed that the weakest point of Cartesian theory was

⁵ Giovanni Battista Benedetti, *Lettere apologetiche* (Napoli: G. Raillard, 1694), pp. 144, 224–5.

not its philosophy or its physics but its conception of human nature. By making mind the peculiar property of human beings, Descartes was compelled to conclude that all other living things could not possess consciousness. To deny emotion and feeling to animals was ludicrous and contradicted by everyday experience, yet, as Benedetti repeats, this was a consequence of Descartes' absolute distinction of mind and body. Descartes was aware of the problem that in his system it wasn't clear how the mind communicated with the body, as it obviously did. He suggested that the pineal gland, through some yet to be explained means or mechanism, fulfilled this task. Benedetti, joining a long line of Descartes' critics, ridiculed this idea; noting that in making the behavior of living things indistinct from machines, Descartes made a physical organ, the pineal gland, the seat of the soul. The easiest way for the Cartesian, according to Benedetti, to escape these absurdities would be to just admit that mind and matter were the modifications of some one substance—this was the atheism of Spinoza which contended that God was indistinct from his creation. The only acceptable solution to this horrible alternative, according to Benedetti, was to return to the tried and true theology and philosophy based on Aristotle and the scholastics. Such principles could support, in his view, the sensible moral philosophy of the Jesuits rather than Descartes' pseudo-science and the inhuman rigor of the Jansenists.

Benedetti had more to say on these topics and in 1695 he prepared a work known as *Turris fortitudinis* (Tower of Strength). This work was written in Latin and the supposed author was Giovanni Cauteio. No printed copies of the essay or sermon survive; an examination of the manuscripts makes one wonder why this little Latin book caused such an outcry. The work praised Benedetti and Aletino and goes on to attack the free thinkers who support the heretical ideas of Copernicus and Descartes. The author refers to the scientific academy, the *Investiganti*, associated with Cornelio and Di Capoa, alludes to Valletta's library, and, he makes pointed reference to one of Di Capoa's works, though his name is not mentioned. In the copies I have seen Benedetti does not name specific individuals associated with modern philosophy at Naples. But, according to Confuorto's diary entries for the end of February, 1696, the entire city was in a turmoil about *Turris fortitudinis*, and that it had named Nicolo Caravita and Giuseppe Valletta as holding heretical opinions. Costantino Grimaldi, who was to write against Benedetti's works, repeated this

claim in his autobiography written in the late 1720s. Given this evidence it may be inferred that Confuorto and Grimaldi never actually saw the pamphlet and that they were repeating rumors. A manuscript petition attacking *Turris* and the supposed author Giovanni Cauteio, called it an outrageous libel and a threat to the City, but makes no mention that specific individuals were attacked.

The authorship was not known in February, 1696, though it was believed to have been written by a Jesuit. The printer, however, had been identified as Geronimo Fasulo; Fasulo had been one of the printers publishing works concerning the 1688 earthquake. On February 23 he and his associates were arrested because they had published *Turris* without the requisite permissions or licence. They were paraded down the Street of the Book Sellers while a herald proclaimed their crime of illegal publication and their punishment of serving time on the galleys. Fasulo admitted to doing the printing and claimed that the text was given to him by a Jesuit he didn't know. The Jesuits did not co-operate with the investigation. The strong and speedy reaction of the Viceroy should probably be seen as part of the ongoing controversy between the Jesuit General Gonzalez, who was supported by the Spanish monarch, against conservative Jesuits in Naples and Rome. While the Viceroy's action was in a sense a victory for the Modern philosophy in Naples, this was probably a lesser concern.⁶ Spain was very interested in asserting its rights against the pretensions of Rome; furthermore during the ongoing 9 Years War, or the War of the League of Augsburg, Spain suspected the Jesuits of wide-spread sympathy for their enemy France.

If the rapid suppression of the publication of *Turris* was done to favor the Moderns in Naples, their reaction, specifically the Moderns' failure to publish an attack on Benedetti is surprising. In 1696 compositions defending Di Capoa were being written but no move was made to publish them. When they were finished the authors chose to have them circulate only in manuscript. Nowadays our academic culture doesn't favor those who keep their manuscripts in their desk drawers or only show them to a few friends (though electronic mail and other kinds of networks which encourage the sharing of drafts

⁶ The manuscripts of *Turris* are BSNP MSS XXIII D 6, ll. 145r-159v; and BNN MSS XV B 6, 64v-76v. In this same manuscript volume is included the attack on Benedetti; ll. 77r-94r titled "Ragione esposta dalla fedelissima Città di Napoli alla Maestà da Carlo Secondo Monarca delle Spagna e suo natural signore contro il Dottor Cautejo". Confuorto, *Il Diario*, 2, 199-200.

may eventually become a way to gain prestige that may rival prompt publication). Publications had not yet become the great leveller in the Neapolitan scholarly community and individuals could still have a reputation for scholarship without producing a book. Prestige and authority could be acquired through the ability to use local patronage networks, a willingness to create and pursue connections with internationally known scholars, and even teaching and the possession of great learning were among the avenues to fame in this academic community. Obituaries of scholars from this time would frequently list not only published works but titles of manuscript works, and these manuscript lists were frequently quite long; most of these works disappeared without a trace.

We don't know much about the mentality of authors who wrote manuscript books for circulation in the age of print culture. Important studies of the relation of oral and written traditions, and the impact of the printing press on manuscript culture have changed our conception of literacy and book learning. Our analysis of the cultural choice represented by the decision to circulate a work in manuscript during the age of print culture is far less sophisticated. Most attention has been on the manuscript circulation of works deemed too controversial to risk publication. There was, however, a significant amount of intellectual production that circulated in manuscript that did not concern dangerous topics. On the whole these were not private writings of the author unintended for the eyes of others, nor were they drafts of works in progress; they were completed works written with a specific, limited audience in mind. Frequently the works would be dedicated to a specific patron, but, since the work was not being printed no approval letters were included. In most cases it was not the expense that deterred an author from printing their work; it was a deliberate choice. Leibniz's career is an example of a scholar who acquired an impressive reputation although most of what he wrote remained in manuscript during his lifetime. Newton's fear of publication may be a part of his personal pathology; nevertheless most of his writing was unpublished at the time of his death. It is telling of the intellectual culture of the late seventeenth century that a work the significance of Descartes' *Regulae* (*Rules for the Direction of the Mind*) could be widely known from its manuscript circulation but did not receive publication until 1701. In an earlier period John Donne did not publish most of his poetry and prose during his lifetime but circulated it in manuscript; the disinterest of

major Elizabethan playwrights in publication is well known. And through the eighteenth century most music was communicated and preserved in manuscript circulation. The Neapolitan authors who used manuscripts for their work were participating in an intellectual exchange that shared some of the norms associated with printing but also had rules of its own.

The Moderns Counter-attack in Manuscript

A number of manuscript writings concerning the issues raised in Benedetti's *Lettere* appeared in the latter part of the 1690s. Most of them concerned specific accusations raised against Leonardo di Capoa, and all address the issue of materialism, Democritus and the theory of atoms, and the thought of Pythagoras.⁷ Among the first of these was a lecture given by the 21 year-old Matteo Egizio in 1695 at a meeting of the academy of the *Uniti* (the United Ones).⁸ The lecture, delivered in Latin, entitled *De scientiarum ambiguitate* (Concerning ambiguity in the sciences) was not published until 1751. While his lecture concerned the sciences, he also addressed matters of religion making two remarkable claims. He proposed as two certain truths: (1) that Christianity was most flourishing in times of ignorance; and, (2) that Christianity was not a religion of the learned. He goes on to argue for Galileo's position on the separation of the scientific disciplines from theology.⁹ This view was a theme uniting those who answered Benedetti; this same conception of science was crucial for Vico's *Scienza nuova*.¹⁰

Francesco D'Andrea, Naples' most illustrious lawyer, prepared two attacks on Benedetti, one of some 400 pages dated 1697; the other

⁷ On the atomic theory in seventeenth Italy, see, for example, Ugo Baldini, "Il corpuscolarismo italiano del Seicento. Problemi di metodo e prospettive di ricerca" in *Ricerche sull'atomismo del Seicento* (Firenze: "La Nuova Italia", 1977), 1-76.

⁸ See also Maurizio Torrini, "Atomi in Arcadia", *Nouvelles de la République des lettres*, (1984), 4, 81-95; Torrini describes an Arcadian lecture of Bartolomeo Ceva Grimaldi, Duca di Telesse, which may be the first piece to answer Benedetti.

⁹ Matteo Egizio, *Opuscoli volgari e latini* (Napoli: Angelo Vocola, 1751), 321. For another context for this work: Maurizio Torrini, "Il topos della meraviglia" in *Francis Bacon: terminologia e fortuna nel XVII secolo*, ed. Marta Fattori (Roma: Ateneo, 1984), 277.

¹⁰ Maurizio Torrini, "La discussione sullo statuto delle scienze tra la fine del '600 e l'inizio del '700", in *Galileo e Napoli*, ed. Fabrizio Lomonaco and Maurizio Torrini (Napoli: Guida, 1987), 375-380, 383.

was written on the island of Procida in the winter of 1697–98, completed just before his death. This second manuscript is less than half the length of the first, and is a much more personal memoir of intellectual activity in Naples. The first concerned the ideas and beliefs of Leonardo di Capoa, the second tells, on a personal level, why D'Andrea sided with the views of Di Capoa and Cornelio. He gives a sense of what it was like for a man trained in the law to study the ideas of Descartes. According to D'Andrea finding the books of the Moderns and reading them was no problem; Gassendi was not on the Index and even though Descartes had been partially censored by the Index, permission to read him was granted routinely.

A major part of D'Andrea's argument in the second manuscript concerned rival theories about light. While the atomists were committed to the notion that light was some kind of particle, the Aristotelian explanation, as he understood it, was that light had no physical substance, it was a quality. The analytical language used by the scholastics merely served to confuse the issue and to obscure what they couldn't explain. Cornelio had been able to prove to him why conceiving light as a particle made sense. D'Andrea recounted how he once told Cornelio of an experience he had had as a young man while on the island of Capri in the summer. He had gone out in a boat and had sailed into one of the caves or caverns along the sea shore. At first when they entered everything seemed dark, and then he remembered how the ceiling began to flicker and dance with light reflecting from the water. Cornelio explained to him that this had happened because having been in the sun the pupil of his eye had narrowed, it took time for it to expand enough so that a sufficient number of light particles could reach his optic nerve. And, he added, if light were a quality, you should have been able to see the reflections right away. For D'Andrea it was this kind of practical explanation based on a simple mechanism that showed the superiority of the views of the Moderns.¹¹ He cited other arguments as well, such as,

¹¹ BNN MSS I D 4, "Risposta a favore del Sig. Leonardo de Capoa contro le Lettere apologetiche". MSS BNN IX A 66 "Risposta del Signor Francesco d'Andrea a favore del Signor Lionardo de Capua contro le Lettere Apologetiche", the description of Capri is on l. 62v. A related manuscript is in the Biblioteca Oratoriani di Napoli, MSS XXVIII 4 l. Vittor Ivo Comparato, "Ragione e fede nelle discussioni storiche, teologiche e filosofiche di Costantino Grimaldi" in *Saggi e ricerche sul Settecento* (Napoli: Istituto Italiano per gli studi storici, 1968), pp. 79–80. Comparato notes that ll. 92r–126r of the B. Orat. manuscript is a copy of BNN MSS I D 4, pp. 286–317. The second essay on atomism in Porzio's papers is not a copy from D'Andrea's

is it plausible that God on the first day of Creation would have made a mere quality, something lacking in substance? But what persuaded him were experiments he had done himself.

D'Andrea defends Di Capoa from Benedetti's accusation that he supported the hypothesis of Copernicus. He describes him as a Cartesian in spirit but not in doctrine and showed where Di Capoa disagreed with Descartes. Di Capoa didn't rely on theories but only on experiments and observations; to use D'Andrea's terms what he wanted was certainty, *certezza*, in observation, and demonstrations based on natural laws. He knew the views of Descartes, Gassendi, Boyle, Hobbes and Galileo. D'Andrea was interested in the studies reported by the Royal Society and stated that many of the Neapolitan members of the Accademia degli Investiganti had followed Descartes and supported Copernicus. Bruno's ideas were openly discussed at these meetings. While he did not advocate any of these views he does make clear his belief that the first chapter of Genesis cannot be read as a scientific account of the origin of their world; in his view Moses wrote it in this form to accommodate his essential message to the limited intelligence of his audience. Among the sources he cites was Alessandro Marchetti's translation of Lucretius. This, the "Tuscan Lucretius", had not yet been published but had had a very wide circulation throughout Italy.¹²

Arguments about light, attacks against scholastics and Aristotle-bashing were important, but the heart of his argument was a version of the Galileian argument that scientists should be free to study the natural world without interference from theologians. Medical theory, the motions of bodies and even the structure of the heavens should be studied in their own terms; theology and metaphysics, he argued, had no place in such an analysis. This argument of the autonomy of scholarly disciplines was based on a trust between different groups of intellectuals; hence while theologians would not pronounce on astronomy, neither would astronomers pontificate on religion. This line of reasoning repeats the political values promoted by many of the lawyers involved in the controversy with the Inquisition. It is perhaps in

work. For a comparison of these works see Amedeo Quondam, "Minima Dandreiana: prima ricognizione sul testo delle 'Risposte' di Francesco D'Andrea a Benedetto Aletino," *Rivista storica italiana*, 82 (1970), 887-916.

¹² Mario Saccenti, *Lucrezio in Toscana: Studio su Alessandro Marchetti* (Firenze: Olschki, 1966) for the history of this widely read version of Lucretius.

terms of this issue of autonomy of disciplines and what was seen as its corresponding moral virtue, moderation, that we should understand the decision not to publish these reflections. Or, to phrase it differently, there were trade offs; if scientists were allowed freedom of research, they would not require the publicity associated with printing. Manuscript circulation combined with freedom of inquiry would guarantee the limited promulgation of results.

During this same time Francesco Valletta composed a number of manuscripts entitled *Lettera in difesa della moderna filosofia* (Letter in defense of modern philosophy).¹³ Valletta, a good friend of D'Andrea, was in his early sixties and a major figure in the local intellectual scene. His library was Naples' most important institution of learning; he must have been one of the best read men in the city. He seems, however, to have had little desire to be a published author. Prosperous Neapolitan lawyers were expected to put some of their most successful cases in print and the mid 1670s are the probable date for the publication of a collection of his legal briefs. In his 1678 bibliography of Neapolitan writers Nicolo Toppi listed Valletta as the author of *De nihilo*, the work is apparently lost but may have been a work on atomism—the title gives little away. In the mid 1680s he retired from his career as a lawyer and devoted his attention to his collections of books and manuscripts, paintings and antiquities. Valletta participated in the controversy concerning the Inquisition; a number of his *Lettera* on the subject remain in manuscript. After this he began writing a defense of Modern philosophy and to give an account of its historical origins. There is no indication that he began this as an answer to Benedetti, and the work can be read independent of it. While Benedetti's work was not completely irrelevant to it, the essay was a contribution to the new European interest in the history of philosophy.¹⁴ In it Valletta continued essentially the same format as the letter concerning the Inquisition; he writes it as a letter addressed

¹³ Giuseppe Valletta, *Opere filosofiche*, ed. Michele Rak (Firenze: Olschki, 1975). Rak has collated all the manuscripts, and included all the variant readings. He also has included in his edition the text of the *Istoria filosofica* which received a limited printing in 1704.

¹⁴ Francesco Bottin, Mario Longo, and Gregorio Piaia, *Dall'età cartesiana a Brucker* (Brescia: La Scuola, 1979), pp. 271–95. D.P. Walker's *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 262–3, and chapters 6 and 7 in general. Also Michael R.G. Spiller, "Concerning Natural Experimental Philosophiae": *Meric Casaubon and the Royal Society* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980), pp. 98–99.

to Pope Innocent XII.¹⁵ Some copies are lavish productions in comparison to the usual manuscript of the times: two different inks, red for certain citations, black for the text. Given this kind of presentation it seems that Valletta viewed them as finished products. He did not, however, select one of them as an authoritative text. Perhaps he viewed them as performances; each had slightly different ornamentation as it were, or, to be precise, documentation, but they all were versions of the same piece.

These copies of the *Lettera* circulated in Naples, and Gaetano Lombardo quotes from Valletta's manuscript in his commentary on his translation of Dailly's *Trattato dell'anima e del conoscenza de bruti animali secondo i principi di Renato delle Cartes* (Treatise on the soul and consciousness of brute animals according to the principles of Rene Descartes) which appeared in 1701. Even though Valletta seemed willing to allow his manuscript to circulate and be cited he made no effort to publish it. We do know that Valletta was not pleased when a very limited printing was made of part of this work in 1704. The copy I have seen lacked a printed title page as well as a dedication and the obligatory approvals. The print run is presumed small because the number of copies that survive is less than the number of manuscripts; I have found no citations of the printed text. The young Girolamo Tartarotti knew nothing of it in 1732 when he published in Rovereto an edition of Valletta's work using the title *Lettera in difesa della moderna filosofia, e de' coltivatori di essa*. Tartarotti's version was dedicated to Pope Clement XI, this means his manuscript was dated no earlier than December 1700.¹⁶ Tartarotti's lengthy introduction is a very interesting document of how much the intellectual climate had changed in 30 years, as well as of the gulf between the interests of scholars in northern Italy with those in the South. Tartarotti considered Bacon and Galileo to be the pillars of modern thought; he notes that being a Cartesian was not synonymous with being a Modern and his criticism of Aristotle was very moderate. His conclusion which gives advice on how to make judgements and assessments was to list the six rules of Mabillon for evaluating evidence and establishing certainty. These concerns were remote from those in Naples and are

¹⁵ On this problem see the detailed Introduction by Michele Rak in his edition of Giuseppe Valletta, *Opere filosofiche*, 34–54.

¹⁶ Giuseppe Valletta, *Opere filosofiche*, 389–403. Rak has reprinted Tartarotti's introduction and has described all the relevant manuscripts and printed texts in this volume.

a sign of the divergent directions of Neapolitan scholars and those of Northern Italy at this time.

Unlike D'Andrea's work, Valletta's letters made only occasional mention of Di Capoa; his arguments scarcely address those made by Benedetti. Valletta, though, was clearly aware of Benedetti's motivations for writing because, not only does Valletta cite Jesuit authors who support aspects of the Modern philosophy, he quotes Tirso Gonzales to provide crucial evidence for the Christian orthodoxy of the atomistic theory of nature. The *Istoria filosofica*, as its title indicates is an historical account of the philosophies of Aristotle and the ideas associated with Epicurus. It is a polemical piece debunking Aristotle and making a strong case for the free investigation of natural philosophy. Like D'Andrea he contends that confusion was created when conclusions drawn from theology were imposed on other scientific studies. In Valletta's mind by applying Aristotle's ideas to Christian doctrine everything had been turned topsy-turvy; probability had been introduced to religion and absolute claims were made for scientific hypotheses. The result was casuistry in ethics and dogmatism in physics.¹⁷ Valletta and D'Andrea repeat the same old argument that Galileo made in his "Letter to the Duchess" that theology and the study of Scripture had no place in the researches of the natural philosopher.

Valletta asserts two major historical claims, the first is that Epicurus' thought had been wrongly portrayed, and the second was that Aristotle's work has been the occasion of unending trouble for Christianity. Since antiquity Epicurus' philosophy and reputation has been associated with a godless natural science based on the theory of atoms and void and a moral doctrine that pleasure was the highest good. Valletta handled the charge of atheism by arguing that Epicurus did not deny God, but the idols of the pagans. And instead of the jovial promoter of conspicuous consumption, Valletta presented him as a sober, even puritanical philosopher. In this Valletta was simply

¹⁷ G. Valletta, *Opere filosofiche, Lettera*, p. 168, summarizes this with a statement of the confusion which results from this mixing of "scienza nelle coscienze, coscienze nelle scienza" (knowledge mixed into conscience or consciousness, consciousness mixed in with knowledge). Vico, in his *New Science*, "Elements", 9-11, discusses these categories, he connects science with philosophy and the true, conscience with philology and the certain. Vico's interest in these concepts can be traced to *De uno*, p. 35 and to *De antiquissima*, chapters 2 and 8. Vico's point, however, is not to keep *scienza* separate from *coscienza* but to make true what was merely certain.

following the work of Pierre Gassendi who devoted most of his career to refurbishing the reputation of Epicurus, a project John Spink has termed “the rehabilitation of Epicurus”.¹⁸ Aristotle, on the other hand, is represented as the cause of just about all intellectual pig-headedness and heresy. Valletta ransacked Francesco Patrizi’s anti-Aristotelian diatribe, *Discussionum peripateticarum* for arguments and slander. He collected citations from the Church Fathers who thought his work dangerous. He tried to link Aristotle’s teachings to all the major ancient and Medieval heresies. And, according to Valletta, Luther, Calvin and Zwingli were all Aristotelians; and even more surprisingly he claims that the infamous seventeenth century atheists, Vannini, Hobbes and Spinoza, were Aristotelians too. Epicurus is connected to a tradition of virtuous and orthodox believers, Aristotle fathered successive generations of intellectual troublemakers. St. Thomas Aquinas, in this view, was not an Aristotelian; he simply sought to show that certain aspects of Aristotle’s thought could be used in describing Christian belief. St. Thomas’ appearance in these debates has received some comment; but another reason for the references to Thomas are because he had become one of Naples’ patron saints in the early seventeenth century. Both sides sought to add another influential patron to support their arguments.

One may well wonder at the “historical analysis” that could have made such statements seem plausible. Valletta models his account on a genealogical succession of teacher and student—clearly he had not taught for he can imagine that students memorize, understand and repeat what they learned unaltered. Despite its inherent implausibility this method had many advocates. This time period was particularly strong in the numbers of histories of philosophy which appeared. For example in 1690 was Le Clerc’s Latin translation of Thomas Stanley’s *History of Philosophy*; the following year Jakob Thomasius published the second edition of his *Schediasma historicum*, the most popular work of this genre; Colberg published his *De origine et progressu haeresiam* in 1691; this was followed in 1692 with the final volume of Daniel Morhof’s *Polyhistor*, and Thomas Burnet’s *Archaeologica philoso-*

¹⁸ John Spink, *French Free-thought from Gassendi to Voltaire* (London: Athlone Press, 1960). Margaret J. Osler, “Ancients, Moderns, and the history of philosophy: Gassendi’s Epicurean project”, in *The rise of modern philosophy: the tension between the new and traditional philosophies from Machiavelli to Leibniz*, ed. Tom Sorell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) 129–143.

phica.¹⁹ The strongest criticism of this tradition was to appear at the end of the decade when Bayle published his massive *Dictionnaire Biographique et Historique* which was organized according to alphabetical order. This format and Bayle's arguments served to emphasize the discontinuities in intellectual traditions and to call into question arguments based on intellectual heredity, or at least paternity. Valletta's main interest in such a genealogical argument was to create a tradition and its anti-tradition; this makes his account seem factitious, even spurious.

During the same time that Valletta was rewriting the *Lettera* another curious manuscript was prepared and circulated with the title *Giannettasius vel de animarum transmigratione Pythagorica*.²⁰ This work had been attributed to Tomaso Cornelio because of a note on the title page but the work's modern editor Luigi De Franco has shown from references in the text that the work was probably written between 1695 and 1700, more than ten years after the death of Cornelio. The title *Giannettasius* comes from one of the interlocutors, the Jesuit, poet, scientist Niccolò Partenio Giannettasio. The work is dedicated to the lawyer Serafino Biscardi; the author, who we only know as Francesco, makes clear that he was friends of Nicolo Caravita and Domenico Aulisio. Caravita was certainly no friend of Benedetti; Giannettasio was friends with Valletta and had made him a character in his poetic work *Piscatoria et nautica* of 1685. The friendship with Aulisio might indicate an hostility to Di Capoa—Aulisio and Di Capoa had engaged in a vicious controversy concerning the physics of the rainbow in the 1670s and they and afterwards their students, generally, didn't speak to each other.

De Franco regards this dialogue as an exercise in erudition by an author whose basic sympathies and competence was in poetry. In my view he has not understood the significance behind the apparently

¹⁹ Michele Rak, *La parte istorica: storia della filosofia e libertinismo erudito*, Studi vichiani, 6 (Napoli: Guida, 1971). Rak describes this tradition and describes Valletta's relation to it. See also *Dall'età cartesiana a Brucker* (Brescia: La Scuola, 1979), in particular the essay of Gregorio Piaia. The background of this tradition is described in *Dalle origini rinascimentali alla "historia philosophica"* (Brescia: La Scuola, 1975).

²⁰ *Giannettasius vel de animarum transmigratione pythagorica. Dialogus*, ed. Luigi de Franco (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1978). De Franco's edition is the first publication of this anonymous text. He investigates its likely time of composition, and considers possible authors. His argument concerning the date and certain of his arguments concerning authorship persuade, but I believe, as I shall explain in the text, he has misread the context of this work and hence incorrectly infers the work was written by a supporter of Benedetti.

odd choice of topic: Pythagoras' theory of the transmigration of souls. In Valletta's history of philosophy Pythagoras had been a key figure linking a number of traditions of ancient thought. In the 1690s Pythagoras' views on the soul summarized and were used, sometimes, as a covert way of discussing a crucial problem in Cartesian philosophy—the question as to whether animals possessed a soul. Descartes had argued that animals were living machines which had no feeling. But, not only had Descartes taken away consciousness from animals, his theory deprived them of a genuine identity, their individuality was only an apparent one, because they lacked a thinking soul. And Cartesians had argued that if animals had immortal souls, one would have to grant metempsychosis, or even greater absurdities such as their being separate heavens for dead animals. The character Giannettasio, in criticizing the doctrine of transmigration of souls, indicated a tacit support of the Cartesian position. He gave a brief history of heresy, starting with Simon Magus, showing how each error was derived from the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. And he concluded relating debates that the Jesuit Saint Francis Xavier conducted on this issue in Japan, and he explained how Xavier successfully refuted transmigration. Giannettasio the character, in a less direct way than Valletta, appears to be arguing that major intellectual leaders of the Jesuits agree with views of the Cartesians. Clearly Giacomo Raillard knew his public when he published Redi's works concerning the relationship of living and inorganic matter; these works and that of De Rojas concerned this question.

As Francesco, the character, notes, certain modern followers of Aristotle had accepted the notion of a limited transmigration; the soul in these creatures would merely be an accidental property, not a substantial one. Such a view, however, would run counter to the atomists who wanted to completely do away with such notions as accidental properties. The conversation turns to Giannettasio's theories about magnets and then to a conclusion of the dialogue. Giannettasio continues his general approach which was to find a middle way between the views of the followers of Aristotle and the atomists.²¹ We do not know to what extent all the views expressed in the dialogue reflect Giannettasio's own thoughts, but there seems no reason

²¹ *Giannettasius*, pp. 113–120. Although not cited the author seems familiar with the thought of Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont, a scientist, theosophist, and now remembered from his interactions with Anne Conway and Leibniz.

to suspect them of being at much variance. We know of his friendship with Valletta and Vico; the dialogue links him with Biscardi and Caravita. This dialogue, written at a time when the Jesuits, or at least the faction associated with Benedetti, were under attack, may have been intended as a reminder that there were other voices in the order. In any event, the shared flatteries of Giannettasio and Benedetti approving each others books had disappeared by the mid 1690s.

It is difficult to know what kind of effect these manuscripts had on the Neapolitan intellectual scene. In their autobiographies both Vico and Giannone looked back on this period as one of great intellectual excitement; Naples seemed possessed by academic fadism, first everyone was wild about Descartes, then Gassendi was all the rage, at other times Boyle or Malebranche were the latest craze. But they make no mention of books or manuscript works related to Benedetti controversy. From other evidence it is clear that discussions about the conflict between Modern philosophy and the Ancients was not restricted to academics. A recitative in a new Scarlatti opera of the 1697–98 season contained the following speech delivered by the male clown character who is attempting to seduce his female counterpart: “This modern philosophy penetrates love giving us more liberty; and by employing rules, the matter of love is put in a better form. I don’t make much ado about ceremony, the old ways yield, they yield to the dogmatic customs of the present age. So, given this liberty, do you know what I want to say to you?” And the bass goes on to sing of his pain that can only be eased by making love. This speech is from the *buffa* or comic portion of the opera, and it assumes a certain familiarity of the audience with the dispute of the Ancients and the Moderns. Modern philosophy is associated with liberty, sexual freedom, and with giving fixed, authoritative meanings to terms.²² The ancient ways, as explained earlier in the recitative would have required a go-between rather than direct contact of the lovers. Given the popularity of such comic scenes in Naples, it is fair to presume that the audience was expected to understand the sexual humor and perhaps the word play with form and matter. A further indication of

²² Alessandro Scarlatti, *La Caduta de’Decemviri*, ed. Hermine Weigel Williams (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 53. It is tempting to read this entire scene (Act I, scene viii) as charting the transition from Foucault’s Renaissance *episteme* to a classical one. The scene bemoans the end of the go-between in love matters where three elements were involved, now love has become a binary discourse.

a general interest in this topic is that the librettist, the Roman Silvio Stampiglia, had been in Naples for only a little over a year; although new to the city, he could see the kind of material that could be assured of getting a laugh.

The Moderns Counter-attack in Print

We get a somewhat different perception of this time period from Costantino Grimaldi who was to make his name as the refuter of Benedetti. Grimaldi wrote an autobiography in the late 1720s about when Vico wrote his. Grimaldi saw himself as the heroic intellectual who shoots down his Jesuit opponent in the black birretta. As he remembered it, the Neapolitan intellectual community favorable to the Moderns was depressed because no forthright response had answered *Le lettere apologetiche*; this was not something to joke about, for as he remembered it Modern Philosophy was on the ropes. True, Francesco D'Andrea had written something on the matter, but his approach was a history of philosophy, not an attack on Benedetti.²³ Had Grimaldi confused Valletta's work with D'Andrea's? The description he gives might fit part of D'Andrea's long manuscript refutation; this would suggest that he forgot Valletta's work, or did not know of it. From other indications it seems that Grimaldi, in the late 1690s, was outside the loop of Valletta's circle.

When Grimaldi saw that none of Naples' intellectual leaders were going to write a refutation of Benedetti, Grimaldi decided to do it himself. He only discussed his plan with his father, his uncle and Tommaso Donzelli, an illustrious physician. But, when it was finished in 1699, Grimaldi decided to look abroad for a publisher. Through Carlo Musitano, another physician, he was put in contact with the Genevan printer Samuel de Tournes. Grimaldi ordered 500 copies to be sent to him in Naples having the title *Risposta alla lettera apologetica in difesa della Teologia scolastica di Benedetto Aletino* (An Answer to Benedetto Aletino's Apologetical Letter in Defense of Scholastic Theology) and the false attributions of being printed by Sebastian Hecht in Cologne. Grimaldi's name did not appear on the title page, but the first letter of each section in the first reply, when collected together spelled

²³ Costantino Grimaldi, *Memorie di un anticurialista del Settecento*, ed. Vittor Ivo Comparato (Firenze: Olschki, 1964), p. 14.

out “Costantino Grimaldi, author of this reply to the *Lettere apologetiche* of Benedetto Aletino”.²⁴ To smuggle in his publication Grimaldi sought the aid of Antonio Bulifon, a Frenchman and Naples’ most prestigious publisher. In his autobiography, Grimaldi gives the impression that the distribution of the work was in 1699; but, from Bulifon’s correspondence with Magliabecchi it is clear that the book wasn’t available through him in Naples until August of 1701.²⁵

Grimaldi’s memory on the dates may be clouded; and, if the book didn’t arrive until the summer of 1701, initial enthusiasm for it may have been obscured by the revolt in Naples that September known as the Conspiracy of Macchia. Still there seems no reason to doubt Grimaldi’s general impression that his work was received with great enthusiasm. He described himself as enjoying listening to all the praise bestowed on the unknown author; as he saw it, a 34 year old lawyer had stopped the neo-Aristotelians dead in their tracks. Grimaldi then turned his attention to the second of Benedetti’s letters. He again chose to publish the text abroad, this time he contracted for 600 copies. Tournes was too busy to do the work at that time so he passed it on to an unknown German printer; the publication was dated 1702 and the title page again claimed that it was the work of Hecht in Cologne. The volume was available in 1703 in Naples, but by that time Grimaldi had written a refutation of the third Letter. But, instead of getting the work done abroad, Grimaldi decided to hire Giuseppe Roselli, a Neapolitan printer to do it for him. Roselli produced 750 copies, using once again the false attributions of Hecht and Cologne. Grimaldi may have taken this alternative because the War of Spanish Succession had broken into a fierce conflict increasing the risk and cost of shipping such bulky items as printed sheets of paper. He may also have decided that the uncertainties of the political scene made the prospect of secular or clerical intervention unlikely; or, perhaps, he had found out how clandestine publication was actually done in Naples. As he was to describe it, it seemed one could print anything in Naples as long as the title page attributed it to some other city. A publication which claimed to be from Naples that did not include the requisite approvals would be seen as an affront to the clergy or the state; but, if the publication didn’t claim

²⁴ Costantino Grimaldi, *Memorie*, p. 16, and note 2.

²⁵ C. Grimaldi, *Memorie di un anticurialista del settecento*, pp. 15–17; *Lettere dal Regno*, p. 211.

Naples as its place of publication, the authorities could pretend to know nothing of it. Cologne was a “safe” false place of publication. It was a Catholic city, too far away for any quick inquiries; Benedetti used it as the place of publication for his books defending the Jesuit mission in China which were published in 1701. Because of Geneva’s association as the center of Protestantism, a Catholic couldn’t print a work there.

Grimaldi drafted Replies to Benedetti’s Fourth and Fifth letter, but he never published them.²⁶ It seems as if he intended their publication at some point since the annotation “Non si stampi” (“Not to be printed”) appear in some margins. Given their condition, the writing all over the page and the sloppy hand, it seems unlikely these were intended for manuscript circulation. Benedetti published answers to the first and third reply in 1703 and 1705 respectively; he died in 1706. Grimaldi was ill during this period and perhaps for that reason did not publish the last two parts. Even with the three volumes, Grimaldi’s refutation must have been quite a success. By 1710 Grimaldi tells us that all copies of the three editions were sold, and he should know since he was their primary distributor. Given that most of these copies would have been sold to Neapolitans this suggests a remarkable interest in a very specialized book. We don’t know who bought his books, nor do we know in what settings people might discuss his work.²⁷ One likely spot would have been the bookstores of the city. A decade before, Cristofaro had been remembered arguing for the hypothesis of atoms in a bookstore; Vico’s *Autobiography* corroborates the importance of bookstores. Almost all the significant conversations of his early career take place in them.

Grimaldi’s approach was a point by point refutation of Benedetti’s work. He broke up the text into smaller segments; for some he piled up heaps of erudition and argument, of others he was merely dismissive. While he might achieve a total refutation with this method,

²⁶ *Risposta alla quarto Lettera apologetica per la Peripatetica filosofia al Signor Arrigo Filostasio*, BNN MSS XIII D 114; and *Risposta alla V Lettera Apologetica de Benedetto Aletino*, BNN MSS XIII D 115. Grimaldi has used a numbering system that does not correspond to pages or paragraphs, but it is continuous and seems the easiest way to identify a passage. I will use the symbol “#” when referring to passages from these works.

²⁷ Claudia Petraccone, *Napoli dal cinquecento all’ottocento: problemi di storia demografica e sociale* (Napoli: Guida, 1974), 90–93. Based on marriage contracts she has compiled a fascinating list of professions and divided them into the different regions of the city. Estimates of the number of people involved in the judicial system, many having some measure of literacy, range from 25,000 to 50,000.

the result is that his position remains a patchwork. But Grimaldi's point seemed to have been to show he pulverized Benedetti; a coherent presentation of Descartes' theories was not his emphasis. Furthermore he had no interest in attempting to understand Benedetti's position, and frequently their best arguments just go past each other. By focusing solely on the *Lettere* Grimaldi pays little attention to the interesting critiques and controversies concerning Descartes' thought in the 1690s and the first decade of the eighteenth century.²⁸ In consequence while his work does not contribute to the development of the study of Descartes' ideas, it also did not become dated or associated with a specialists' debate. The self-contained character of Grimaldi's work made it easier to justify his attempt to reprint it in the 1720s.

While D'Andrea focused on matters of experimental science and Valletta on the history of philosophy, Grimaldi concentrated on philosophic issues. For him the fact that the atomic theory provided a "better" explanation for some natural phenomena was insufficient reason to accept Descartes' views. As he saw it the reasons for the strict separation of sacred doctrine from matters of science was based on Descartes' philosophy alone. D'Andrea and Valletta had argued for the complete separation of theological study from that of natural science. And Valletta had gone further in his history of philosophy to condemn the tradition of scholasticism. Grimaldi presents the most fully developed description of the Modern philosophy as it was understood in Naples.

Grimaldi's interest in Descartes did not prompt him to engage in scientific experiment, but he kept abreast of the major controversies. What fascinated him was Descartes' success in describing natural phenomena in clear and straight forward explanations. He believed this came from the simplicity of Descartes' first principles. In contrast Aristotelians used obscure terms that left one as ignorant as before. As Grimaldi expressed it, to explain digestion by referring to a digestive faculty told nothing about the mechanism of the process. This kind of Aristotelian explanation noted change but its analysis was a simple restatement of the fact that a change had occurred. For him what was distinctive about Descartes' system was that it was

²⁸ The book review journals north of the Alps were full of these debates; see Alan Charles Kors, *Atheism in France, 1650-1729*, 1, 374-375, for the references to these reviews.

based on unchanging laws that controlled a variety of different phenomena. These laws were like eternal ordinances of the eternal will of God continually displaying his care and providence for his creation.²⁹ He believed that this idea of law should take the place of the Aristotelian final cause in scientific explanations. Instead of the formative faculties of the scholastics, the Cartesians offer in their stead natural laws.³⁰

This understanding of natural law relied on Descartes' absolute distinction of mind and body. Laws were the spiritual principles that were completely separate from, yet controlled natural bodies. It was only in the deceiving imagination that the mind could believe these two could be combined. Benedetti had argued that the standard of clear and distinct would give free rein to anyone's subjective fantasies. Grimaldi took this view to mean that he hadn't understood the principle of "I think, therefore I am". Apparently the Jesuit's devotion to probabilism had so altered his thought that he couldn't recognize anything as certain. In Grimaldi's view, the distinction of mind and body was inescapable; and while the mind could be understood without the senses, the senses could not be understood without the mind. A fruitful enterprise for philosophy would be to investigate how the mind gives order to its perceptions and how it makes sense of what it knows.³¹

When this idea was applied to human behavior it meant a distinction between the mechanical operations of nature and the processes of consciousness. The similarities in animal and human behavior were to be ascribed to the same features in their sensory mechanism, not to a likeness in their souls. The consequences of such a view could be profound. Sensation and other more complex passions could be understood in terms of their mechanisms and of natural laws. The knowledge from such a physiology, if properly applied, could show the way to control or modify emotional response. Grimaldi accepted the Cartesian argument even if it meant the denial of consciousness and thought to animals. A sense perception was occasioned when a sufficient force vibrated the endings of a nerve; such a reaction could be described without reference to consciousness. And that same nerve

²⁹ Costantino Grimaldi, *Risposta alla terza lettera apologetica contro il Cartesio creduto da più d'Aristotele* (Colonia (but Naples): Sebastian Hecht (but Roselli), 1703), p. 358.

³⁰ BNN MSS XIII D 114, # 469.

³¹ Costantino Grimaldi, *Risposta alla terza lettera*, p. 479.

response could stimulate other organs and glands that could produce other stimuli creating more complex emotional reactions. With mechanisms of this kind, Grimaldi asserts, all animal behavior could be described as automatic and instinctual reactions without reference to deliberation or thought. Although crude, such a theory did manage to avoid the metaphysical language that had become part of the Aristotelian interpretation of simple perception. And he goes on to accept Descartes' hypothesis that the pineal gland somehow brings this mind and body together in the human being.

Grimaldi believed that the Cartesian dichotomy of life and mind was supported not only by philosophy and science; it also was supported by the Christian faith. As he saw it Descartes had given undoubtable proofs of the immortality of the soul. And just as nature can be described based on a few simple laws, Christianity, too, was founded on a few simple principles. The Bible contains moral instruction; it was not written as an erudite philosophy or to give lessons in the natural sciences. In Grimaldi's view, the error of the scholastics was to use Aristotle's philosophy as a way to correct or further interpret the Bible. The scholastics obscured the true simplicity of the Christian faith with petty squabbles over quiddities. And their attachment to the thought of Aristotle was so complete that to disagree with him was tantamount to heresy. Grimaldi contrasted the scientific inventions and discoveries by the Moderns with the feeble repetitions of Aristotle's words by the scholastics.³²

Grimaldi's beliefs about natural science encouraged him to consider a redefinition of the proper function of theology.³³ Benedetti had contended that freedom of opinion was necessary and useful in discussions on matters of faith. While some things were certain and must be believed, there were other matters where different interpretations of scripture or doctrine were possible among learned theologians and one could not decide which view was absolutely the best. This same liberty, however, should not be encouraged in the study of nature because in this case diversity of opinion would engender scepticism towards all knowledge, and thus irreligion. Grimaldi's position inverts this view. As he sees it, the liberty of the scholastics

³² Costantino Grimaldi, *Risposta alla lettera apologetica in difesa della teologia scolastica* (Colonia: Sebastian Hecht, 1699), p. 195.

³³ For parallel developments in Northern Europe, Richard Popkin, "Cartesianism and Biblical Criticism" in *Problems of Cartesianism*, ed. Thomas Lennon, John Nicholas and John Davis (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press), 61-81.

to theologize has only encouraged a disrespect for religion, since many believe one can argue for any position. In its stead, he proposed dogmatism in theology, and freedom to investigate nature. In his view the scholastics had sought to reveal the secrets of heaven but had failed because our human reason cannot comprehend the divine. The recognition of the limits of human reason was both a sign of proper humility and the first step to knowledge. Descartes' description of the "I" and the self-evident way he proceeded from the perception of the thinking self to the existence of God was all the philosophy a Christian needed.³⁴ Once these narrow boundaries were accepted the mind could proceed with certainty and confidence. God had given men the natural world for the free exercise of their mind.

There was a branch of theological study suitable to human reason that should be promoted; that was the historical study of the Old Testament and of early Christian times. This was something pious Christians could argue about and study without endangering the foundations of right belief, at least that is what Grimaldi argued. A knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, the geography of Judea, the customs and beliefs practiced in this region were all useful tools in interpreting Scripture.³⁵ Grimaldi suggested that the student of the Bible should take a page from Mabillon's book and use it to better understand the world in which the Bible was first written. In the manuscript refutation of the Fourth Letter, Grimaldi enters the heterodox, discussing, though not affirming the pre-Adamite hypothesis of Isaac de la Peyrère. Peyrère's argument was based on confusing evidence from Scripture (where did Cain's wife come from?) and such problems as to the origin of the new species of animals and human beings of the Americas that couldn't be traced to Noah's Ark. This convinced La Peyrère that Noah's Flood did not cover the whole world but was only a local one in the Near East and that Adam was not the first man but the first Hebrew. Grimaldi considered these ideas in the context of his more general point that Scripture must be understood in terms of its original, uneducated audience.³⁶ In other

³⁴ Mystics, Quietists and, of course the Jansenists were accused of finding a philosophic justification of their spirituality in Descartes' philosophy. See, William Earle, "Phenomenology of mysticism", *The Monist*, (1976), 59, 519-531.

³⁵ Costantino Grimaldi, *Risposta alla lettera apologetica in difesa della teologia scolastica*, p. 233.

³⁶ BNN MSS XIII D 114, # 341, 328.

words, Scripture is neither a perfect authority on natural philosophy or ancient history; investigators using proper methods have the real facts and knowledge to pronounce on such matters with authority.

Grimaldi's attitude towards theology had an ingenuous simplicity and modesty of claims. It was this attractive artlessness that Benedetti saw as its gravest danger. The scholastics had made the study of sacred doctrine the center of their intellectual world. Their research centered on metaphysical questions that Cartesians attempted to dismiss or deny as important. The practical and limited ambition of the Moderns provoked Benedetti to suggest "since they love utility and gain so much, why don't they abandon the name and title of philosopher, let them become merchants and just make money".³⁷ Grimaldi spurned such taunts for he believed that Descartes' vision of a natural science founded on simple laws harmonized easily with his vision of Christianity based on a few simple precepts. Grimaldi outlined his approach to the historical study of the Bible. Instead of continuing this project, and master the scholarly tools he would need, Grimaldi positioned himself for a leading role in Naples' legal administration.

³⁷ G.B. de Benedetti, *Lettere apologetiche*, p. 307.

CHAPTER FOUR

NEW PUBLICATIONS IN THE 1690S: TRAVEL LITERATURE AND CELEBRATORY VERSE

In 1692 a new book was published in Naples, the *Breve e succinta relatione del viaggio nel regno di Congo nell'Africa meridionale* (*A brief and succinct account of a voyage to the Kingdom of the Congo in Southern Africa*), written by the Capuchin monk Girolamo Merolla. Merolla had just returned from ten years as a missionary in the Congo and Angola, and his work contained a detailed description of this experience as well as of his brief stay in Brazil. This kind of literature, the travel narrative with its descriptions of exotic customs was a popular genre of writing. In Protestant countries the travel books about Europe were often written by members of the lesser nobility and clergymen like Burnet; places farther afield were the province of sea captains, adventurers and religious dissenters. In Catholic countries certain religious orders had taken on the role of describing remote lands; the French Jesuits of the seventeenth century, with their *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, had created a literary genre of its own. Jesuits dominated the mission field in China and shared the Spanish Americas with the Franciscans; but in the Congo and in Angola the missions were staffed by Capuchins.¹

This book of Merolla, or more properly, the story as it was told to Father Angelo Piccardo, was published by Francesco Mollo. Aniello di Napoli, in whose house Cristofaro's associates met to discuss modern philosophy, had assisted in its publication. Merolla seemed only to return to Naples, prepare his book, then in the same year he returned to the Angola region, where he died in 1697. He returned with some companions and was supported by a generous funding of 200 ducats; this amount represented the annual salary for an opera singer, about what Solimena received for one of his larger canvases,

¹ The Capuchins also had a significant presence in Georgia. A Neapolitan Capuchin, Bernardo Maria da Napoli, had done work in Georgia in the 1670s, had translated some important materials and then returned to Naples to teach theology and philosophy to Capuchin novices. Salvatore Bono, "Bernardo Maria da Napoli", *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani*, 9, 312–314.

or twice the annual salary of a beginning college professor.² The book had a great popularity; it was translated into English as part of Awnshame Churchill's multi-volume collection of travel literature, *A collection of voyages and travels*, which was first published in 1704. Churchill's volumes went through many editions in the eighteenth century. The English translation edits and abridges Merolla's text removing the classical allusions and other signs of the erudition and literary taste of Merolla and Piccardo. The first French translation appeared in 1747. There was enough interest in the work in Naples to merit a second edition in 1726 without indicating the publisher.³

Merolla's account consists of curiosities and pieties mixed with arresting observations and telling details of life in Brazil and south western Africa. The text contains a number of engraved illustrations showing the dress, habitations and rituals of Brazil and Sogno, the region in Africa where he had lived for more than eight years. The engraver produced curious representations of mermaids, hippopotamuses as well as of bananas and yams. To Merolla, the taste of bananas reminds him of the dried figs of Calabria. Merolla's journey and stay in Africa was a long one; he left Naples on May 5, 1682 heading for Portugal. Off Corsica they were attacked by pirates—still a continual threat to travel in the Western Mediterranean. In early November Merolla departed Lisbon for Brazil and landed in Bahia (Salvator), a center for sugar production. The sugar market was depressed and Bahia was in a state of relative decline; the gold rush that was to transform the Brazilian economy began in the next decade. Merolla noted the harshness of slavery in the sugar plantations; life expectancy, he says, was seven years.⁴ Here he was introduced to bananas and cocoa. He saw, for the first time, people being carried in hammocks in the street; his initial reaction was to believe

² Gray, Richard, "Fra Girolamo Merolla da Sorrento, the Congregation of Propaganda Fide and the Atlantic slave trade" in *La conoscenza dell'Asia e dell'Africa in Italia nei secoli XVIII e XIX*, ed. Ugo Marazzi (Napoli: Istituto orientali, 1984) v. 2, 803–11. Teobaldo Filesi and Isidora de Villapadierna, *La "Missio Antiqua" dei Cappuccini nel Congo (1645–1835): Studio Preliminare e guida delle fonti* (Roma: Istituto Storico Cappuccini, 1978), 115, 153–55.

³ Vico, it seems, read this edition, for in the second and third editions of the *New Science* (# 334), he refers to unnamed travel writers who tell of atheists in Brazil and southern Africa. Such descriptions appear in Merolla's work. Vico makes no comparable reference in the first edition or in *De uno*.

⁴ A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *The Black Man in Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (Oxford: Macmillan, 1982), 1–5. The harshness of Brazilian slavery was noted by many contemporary travellers.

the passenger was dead and he promptly started to lead a procession for the dead one singing the *De profundis*. He has recorded a telling criteria as to what constituted a European's view of civilized life when explaining how the Portuguese brought order to the Indian inhabitants of Brazil: "they were led to our way of living and made to dine at proper times."⁵

In the spring of 1683, he departed Brazil and after a long voyage of 77 days he arrived in Angola on May 6. The Capuchin Mission was in the independent Kingdom of Soyo, Nsoyo or Sogno, a region on the Atlantic, north of Portuguese Angola and south of the Zaire River. For this area and for this time period the Christian religion had become an important part of life at Soyo.⁶ Merolla did not know the local language at first, hence he delivered his first sermon in Latin.⁷ He was surprised at its reception, because as he worked himself up to greater enthusiasm, the audience began to respond answering with what seemed to him a humming. As he was to learn this was actually a form of protest voiced against another member of the mission. Later he learned the language and included a glossary of some of the most important words of this language at the end of his book. He recorded various rituals, among them a method to induce rain, and other customs associated with pregnancy, menstruation, weaning and lion killing.

By the time he arrived the efforts of previous missionaries had achieved a certain kind of harmony between the traditions of the people of Soyo and the new sacraments and holy days of the Catholics. The syncretism was productive, though there was tension as well.⁸ For the rulers of Soyo being Catholic had certain political advantages. The Portuguese were hostile to the Kingdom of Soyo, and

⁵ Girolamo Merolla, *Breve e succinta relatione del viaggio nel regno di Congo nell'Africa meridionale* (Napoli: Francesco Mollo, 1692), p. 38.

⁶ Richard Gray, "'Come vero prencipe catolico': The Capuchins and the Rulers of Soyo in the Late Seventeenth Century", *Africa*, (1983) 53, 39-54.

⁷ Some 200 years later Conrad's Marlowe, in a similar location, makes an impassioned speech in English to an audience that only understands the performance but not the language.

⁸ Creativity and synchronism can sometimes produce some remarkable syntheses. The case of Kimpa Vita Beatrice, or Dona Beatriz, who in the early eighteenth century proclaimed herself to be St. Anthony, asserted she was to lead the Congo to peace. Her combination of Christian and indigenous religious practice was called the Antonian movement; it did not long survive her execution as a heretic in 1706. John Thornton, *The Kingdom of Kongo* (Madison Wi.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), pp. 106-112.

though they insisted that no Spanish missionaries be admitted they were willing to allow Italians in the area. In 1670 the Portuguese had sought to intervene decisively in the Congo from their bases in Angola. But, after some initial successes their army of 400 musketeers, artillery and other allies was decisively defeated on October 18. This was the feast of St. Luke and it became an important holiday for the Catholics of Soyo. Later, in the mid 1680s, Soyo defeated their northern neighbor, the Ngoyo, whose army was aided by British troops. In 1690 a peace treaty was agreed upon between Soyo and the Portuguese, and normal trading relations were resumed between the two powers.⁹ From Merolla's account it is clear that the ruler of Soyo had a good understanding of European political rivalry; and Christian missionaries with close ties to Rome gave him another potential avenue to put pressure on his Portuguese neighbors should the need arise.

While on many matters the new Christian faith supplemented or added to local tradition; on the issue of marriage, however, there was dissension. Merolla was most eager to control what he considered the irregular marriage practices of the people of Soyo.¹⁰ As he understood their regulations women were allowed to try out a husband before an actual marriage. Merolla sought to force the couples into marriage from the very start. This brought him into direct confrontation with the rulers and he did not hesitate to threaten these leaders with excommunication. His primary relations were with the elite of these different communities whom he called counts; and of one whom he got to know very well he said "though a black, he deserved the full rights of sovereignty".¹¹ This remark should be understood in the context of the sixteenth century debate that had concerned the question as to whether the American Indians had a genuine political community and if these individuals possessed civil rights. Merolla, by attributing to him the rights of a sovereign, was claiming legitimacy for his rule and that he was not a tyrant who disregarded the common good of his subjects. The alternative view

⁹ John Kelly Thornton, *The Kingdom of Kongo*, pp. 79–80, 102.

¹⁰ The reputation of the Italian missionaries in the region was quite high; they seemed to be less governed by racial stereotypes than representatives of the Portuguese empire; and they promoted the development of an indigenous clergy. C.R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire: 1415–1825* (New York: Knopf, 1969), pp. 246–247, 258–259.

¹¹ F. Merolla, *Breve e succinta relatione*, p. 219.

had been used as an argument to justify the enslavement of the Indians, the suppression of their governments, and the confiscation of their territory. This viewpoint could also be used to argue against the slave trade itself.

Merolla had no doubts about his own authority and the propriety of his intervention into this community; in order to discipline this people he found it necessary to excommunicate portions of his flock periodically. He would withhold the healing powers they believed he possessed. During these years there were smallpox epidemics in the region, and this may have been the dreaded disease afflicting them. Another of the harsh realities of the seventeenth century that concerned his pastoral work was the ever present slave trade. He strongly disapproved of it though many of his congregation participated in the slave trade with the New World. Richard Gray has pieced together the role Merolla played in the Vatican's growing concern with the Atlantic slave trade. At this time in Rome, Lourenço da Silva de Mendouça, an Afro-Brazilian who said he was of royal blood, in conjunction with the Capuchin order, obtained a judgement from the Propaganda Fide, the Roman Inquisition, on March 20, 1686, condemning the Atlantic slave trade. This document, while of great theoretical significance and an important statement of Catholic humanism, had no practical impact or moderating influence on the history of the slave trade.¹² It forbade participation in the trade on the grounds of its immorality and affirmed the basic rights of all races. News of this policy was sent to the missions in Angola. We don't know what Merolla saw or was told of this document, but in his book his interpretation of the ruling made no mention of the Vatican disapproving of the trade in general or in principle. He seemed to interpret the directive as only deploring the sale of baptized Catholics. And if one participated in the trade, one should sell to the Dutch not the English: with the Dutch there was a chance of not being forced to become Protestants. The British took the slaves to their colony of Barbados, while the Dutch might sell them to the French, Spanish, or Portuguese. Gray concluded that Merolla was not unsympathetic or insensitive to the slave trade; in practical terms, for someone on the scene it was impossible to know what to do. The

¹² Richard Gray, "The Papacy and the Atlantic Slave Trade: Lourenço da Silva, the Capuchins and the Decisions of the Holy Office", *Past and Present*, 115, 52-68.

trade was part of the local economy, and even the Jesuits, every year, sent a boatload of slaves to Brazil.¹³

In 1693 another travel book was published in Naples. This was the *Viaggio per Europa* (Travels through Europe) of Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri. Gemelli Careri had begun his trip in January of 1686, just after the departures of Burnet and Mabillon. Gemelli Careri was an opera enthusiast. It seems from the date of his departure he waited until he had seen what was new in Naples before heading north to Venice to catch what was happening in Carnival season there. What was playing in Naples? On November 22, 1685, Confuorto notes the performance of a comedy "Il Fetonte" (Phaeton) performed by the Armonici—a comedy about Phaeton seems more along Breughel's line and perhaps Confuorto's use of genre is imprecise. The music has been attributed to Alessandro Scarlatti, but that is controversial.¹⁴ The libretto was written by Giuseppe Domenico de Totis, a Roman, associated with Queen Christina's circle in Rome, who wrote several texts used by Scarlatti. But we do know that the libretto of Scarlatti's "Olimpia vendicata" was by the Venetian Aurelio Aureli and that it was first performed in Naples on December 23, 1685. Librettos were customarily printed for the works being performed that season; and sometimes these are the only traces of an opera. The music was rarely printed and we are dependent on the survival of a manuscript for the composer's work. Records of the scenery and the stage machinery employed for a particular performance are even more rare. And, while it is irrelevant to my present concern, it may be of interest to note that on October 26 of 1685 a sixth child, named Domenico, was born to the Scarlatti family; and earlier that year in Germany Johann Sebastian Bach was born on March 21, and George Friedrich Handel had been born the previous month on February 23.

Gemelli Careri was in Venice in January 1686; he recounted his journey in the form of letters written to Amato Danio, one of the lawyers who participated in the controversy with the Inquisition. Unfortunately we do not possess Danio's side of the correspondence, though we can infer his answers indicated a lively interest and spirited response to what his friend experienced. At this time there were

¹³ Richard Gray, "Fra Girolamo da Sorrento", v. 2, p. 809.

¹⁴ Roberto Pagano and Lino Bianchi, *Alessandro Scarlatti*, (Torino: ERI, 1972), p. 81, 336-7.

some seven opera theaters in Venice and Gemelli Careri went to a number of them. He saw Domenico Gabrielli's *La Teodora augusta*, a *Clearcho da Negroponte*, *Jugurtha*, *Re di Numidia*, and a *Didone abbandonate*. He was disappointed to miss hearing one of the great *castrati* of the day, Cortona, who had chosen to remain in Dresden. Later in April at Versailles Gemelli Careri was to hear compositions of Lully, a Florentine, who had been in France since 1646, first serving as under-scellion in the Guise household. In 1652 Lully was director of Louis XIV's violins, and in 1672 became the king's chief composer. In 1686 he wrote the opera *Armide* and *Acis et Galathée*. Gemelli Careri was dismissive of the style of French opera and the quality of their musicianship. His attitudes were not simply Italian chauvinism; by common consent opera in Venice and Naples was recognized as the best in the world. A couple of years later, when Gemelli Careri was in Nanjing, China, he attended a Chinese opera which lasted some ten hours. He was impressed and entertained by the music, the costumes and scenery, the quality of the singing and the ability of the performers to convey passion. He did not mention the female impersonators that were such a striking feature of this tradition; probably, being familiar with the Roman practice which did not permit women on the stage and required all roles be sung by males, this did not strike him as odd. The traditions of Italian *opera seria* seemed to have prepared him to appreciate and be challenged by a very different cultural tradition. It is to be regretted that because Japan was essentially closed to Europeans, we do not know how Gemelli Careri might have reacted to *Noh* theater which contain interesting parallels to the *opera seria* tradition.

In 1686, Gemelli Careri spent about a month in Venice; he summarized its institutions, churches and traditions. Whether this description of the aristocratic government of the Venetians carried an implicit criticism of the Spanish imperial model is not clear. His correspondent Danio did, however, react to Gemelli Careri's discussion of Joachim of Fiore, a twelfth century monk whose allegorical interpretation of past and future history have remained potent stimulants to the imagination. Gemelli Careri discussed the tradition that Joachim designed the mosaics of St. Mark's and that within the pattern was outlined predictions of future events.¹⁵ Danio seems to have

¹⁵ On this tradition, Otto Demus, *The mosaics of San Marco in Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) 1, 256-259; and Ottavia Niccoli, *Prophecy and*

taken offense at Gemelli Careri's more sceptical attitude to Joachim's prophecies. There was an ongoing interest in the writings or at least the stories associated with Joachim in Naples. Travelling through Milan and Turin, Gemelli Careri reached Lyons in the middle of March. There he visited the bookshop and press of Anisson, a major supplier of foreign, particularly French publications for interested readers in Naples. He spent April in Paris and Versailles. In Paris he reflected on the superiority of the Moderns over the Ancients; in the field of philosophy, he praised the pre-eminence of Descartes. He took this as an opportunity to extol the scholarly vitality and intellectual curiosity of his fellow Neapolitans. He made clear his support of the Moderns, and as far as one can see this elicited no hostile response from Danio.

In May he crossed the Channel and visited London. London, as had Paris, overwhelmed him with its numerous population, Naples was clearly smaller by comparison. As with subsequent Catholic travellers, Montesquieu for example and even to some extent Voltaire, he felt the English had gone too far in their political life and especially on the issue of religious toleration. Gemelli Careri concluded that the diversity of religious sects created too much spiritual chaos. While he proclaimed his philosophic allegiance in Paris, in London he wrote enthusiastically of the Royal Society and all its works; and while he would encourage philosophical liberty in the pursuit of natural science, he drew back from the religious liberty allowed in England. He was sceptical of James II's ability to restore Catholicism in England. As a tourist in Covent Garden he was fascinated by an Irish woman who was completely covered with hair from her waist down, and by a rhinoceros which was on display. He found no opera so he attended the theater instead. He did not tell us what he saw, and it didn't really matter since he couldn't understand English. He found the play dull but enjoyed watching the audience and the various trades and preoccupations that appeared to be going on in the theater and just outside.

Gemelli Careri returned to the continent landing at Bruges and travelled on to Amsterdam and then Cologne. He ended his book with a letter from Vienna. There he went on to join the imperial army under the command of Charles V of Lorraine which was laying siege

to Buda. A century and a half of Turkish rule over that city came to an end on September 2. He stayed with the army through its capture of Belgrade; but this was to be another book, published after his trip around the world. Gemelli Careri returned to Naples and perhaps with the help of Matteo Egizio prepared his European travels for publication. His work might seem daring in its clear praise of the natural philosophies of Descartes and the hypotheses of atoms and void. He had left Naples in the wake of Mabillon and Burnet when it was fashionable to praise the scientific work of Cornelio and Di Capoa. When he returned adherents of this philosophy were being held in an ecclesiastical prison, and a conservative Neapolitan was Pope. The fact that Gemelli Careri published his work at this time without clerical opposition is another indication that the arrest of Cristofaro and his friends was not part of a concerted attack on the Moderns. It is telling of the quality of his observations that Awnshame Churchill's 1704 collection of travel literature also included Gemelli Careri's account.

But in June of 1693, just after publishing his European travels he set out to travel around the world. He returned from his global journey on December 4, 1698, the first Neapolitan to make such a trip.¹⁶ We know Neapolitans were in touch with him for in a lecture Valletta gave to the Academy of Medina Coeli, he cites a letter Gemelli Careri had written to Amato Danio from Persia.¹⁷ Gemelli Careri had left Naples on June 13, 1693, had gone to Messina, then Malta and to Alexandria. He had travelled to Istanbul, through Persia to Isphahan where he saw the coronation of a new king; he sailed to India, went to China and claims to have had an audience with the Emperor Kang XI. From China he went to the Philippines, crossed the Pacific in a gruelling trip of 204 days. He landed at Acapulco, crossed to Mexico City, travelled across the Atlantic, stopping at Cadiz, Madrid, southern France and northern Italy before returning to Naples.

¹⁶ On Gemelli Careri, see Alberto Magnaghi, *Il viaggiatore Gemelli Careri (sec. XVII) e il suo 'Giro del Mondo* (Bergamo: Cattaneo, 1900); and Michael MacMillan, *The Globe Trotter in India Two Hundred Years Ago* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1895); and F.A. Nunnari, *Un viaggiatore Calabrese della fine del secolo XVII* (Messina: Mazzini, 1901). Magnaghi accuses Gemelli Careri of plagiarism and of relying over much on Egizio. Nunnari refutes these charges.

¹⁷ BNN MSS XIII B 69, 97v–98r. The actual date of the lecture is unknown but it was probably in 1698 before his return. In this lecture Valletta also finds occasion to flatter Medina Coeli, comparing his breeding and intelligence to Alfonso the Magnanimous.

Gemelli Careri's journeys are a marvelously rich source for a Neapolitan's reaction to the world. He was a well informed traveller for he knew the greatest of Europe's cities; he had lived in Naples and Palermo, and had visited London and Paris. He travelled at a time when the European economy and standard of living was roughly comparable at all social levels with the great economies of Asia. He will note the occasional European manufacture that he sees but such objects were still a rarity in the 1690s. To his eye Istanbul was next to Paris in size, but Nanjing was perhaps the largest city in the world. The traffic and press of people in Peking and Nanjing was greater than anything he had experienced in Naples; Canton was a continuous bazaar or fair. India's Mogul Empire, in his view, seemed to be the wealthiest in the world; it was closely followed China. He was particularly impressed with China's system of canals; such public works were on a scale he did not imagine possible. He understood the connection between the organization of the Chinese state and agricultural production. Unlike European wheat fields, the Chinese rice paddies were never fallow and rice grew all the time. He noted that Chinese silk looms were exported to the Spanish Americas. Labor, he found, was very cheap in China. For a single Piece of Eight he hired a cook for a month. And, it seems he financed his whole trip with a bag of silver coins he took with him from Naples. Spanish coin seemed to be a universal currency.

He may have been the only Neapolitan travelling through but it is remarkable the number of southern Italians he meets along the way. Most of them were in religious orders. His most interesting example of cultural exchange was a Mexican Franciscan doing missionary work in China. Besides what he sees, he also reveals a number of interesting characteristics that show something about Neapolitan aristocratic tastes and values. His usual measure for distance was a pistol or a musket shot. He has the Neapolitan's taste for sherbert and ices; he drank coffee and used tobacco. Gemelli Careri was a fanatic about chocolate and his standard for extreme hardship were those occasions when he couldn't have his cup of hot chocolate. He preferred his food prepared with olive oil and found he could not eat pilaf because it was cooked with butter. Eggs were his measure of cheap food. While the amount of meat consumed in northern Europe amazed him, the Chinese diet was too vegetarian and he supplemented his meals with whole chickens. He had never eaten corn until his arrival at Acapulco; he rated its bread far inferior to

breads made from wheat. He could understand why the (European?) citizens of Mexico City would riot against the government when there were not adequate supplies of wheat flour available.

On his return he contacted Matteo Egizio and together they worked on giving literary form to his adventure. Giuseppe Roselli published the six volume work, *Giro del mondo* (Travelling Round the World); the first volume appeared late in 1699 and contained a frontispiece engraved by Magliar who had engraved Solimena's designs for Giannestasio's books. Amato Danio, his correspondant from his trip to northern Europe wrote an approval and the first volume was dedicated to Naples' viceroy, Medina Coeli. In his dedication, he states that like the learned Academy which Medina Coeli had founded, he too wished to do homage to him. But, from what I have found Gemelli Careri did not receive any official rewards nor spoke at the Academy. It is only after the Austrians drove out the Spanish in 1707 that he gained the kind of sinecure and stipend he had hoped. There may have been some hesitancy because he fought for the Empire against the Turks in the late 1680s; perhaps the association with Egizio and Danio did not put him in good favor either.

Gemelli Careri was probably Naples' most widely known author in the early eighteenth century. Right after the Neapolitan edition his book was printed in Venice in 1700, a second Venetian edition followed in 1719; Parrino published a second Neapolitan edition in 1721, and in 1728 it appeared in Venice again. The first English translation was prepared for Awnshame Churchill's collection of travel reports in 1704; the first French translation was in 1719, it was reviewed in the January, 1720 issue of the *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne*.¹⁸ In 1700 Gemelli Careri and Egizio produced a much rewritten version of his earlier travels to Europe. And Gemelli Careri wrote a new work describing his time in the wars in Hungary and the Balkans in the latter 1680s, *Relazione sopra la campagna d'Ungheria* (*Viaggi per Europa, parte seconda*), (An Account of the Hungarian Campaign, Travels through Europe, Part 2), which was published by Roselli in 1704, and Danio again wrote the approval. Like his earlier *Viaggi per Europa*, this is presented as a series of letters but this time to a variety of correspondents living not only in Naples but also Madrid, Paris and Amsterdam. It is revealing of the times that even though Spain was at war with Austria in 1704, this volume contained in its intro-

¹⁸ *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne*, 1720, 197–212.

ductory matter a letter by Prince Eugene, the commander of the major Austrian army, praising Gemelli Careri.

It is interesting to compare the editions of his *Giro* from around 1700 with those printed around 1720. The later editions include special new chapters on the topic of Indian trade and another on trade in China; and he also added a section on Japan. These changes would suggest a growing Italian interest in the details of Far Eastern commerce. These chapters were not added to later editions of the Churchill translation which simply reprinted the earlier edition. Gemelli Careri's volumes included illustrations of fruit and vegetables, elaborate public ceremonies and processions, and examples of exotic costume. His travel books were reviewed in the *Galleria di Minerva*, the *Giornale de' Letterati*, the *Acta Eruditorum*, and Le Clerc's *Bibliothèque Ancienne et Moderne*.

Celebratory Verse Representing Baroque Heroism

In his *Autobiography* Vico records his participation in a collection of literary tributes prepared for the retiring viceroy the Count of Santisteban (San Estevan), Francisco Benavides y Aragon. This volume was prepared in March of 1696 and was organized by Nicola Caravita.¹⁹ The book consisted of some 50 pages of prose and poetry honoring the Count. Caravita wanted to express publicly gratitude for Santisteban's service as viceroy during the turbulent years of his tour of duty, which was from 1687–96. During his term he had seen through the recoinage of Naples' currency, the controversy with Rome concerning the Inquisition, and at the end of February, 1696, Santisteban had expelled Benedetti from Naples for his publication of *Turris fortitudinis*. The book of praise and thanks provides no specific clues as to what motivated its publication. The panegyrical character of the poetry did not lend itself to specific references to actual events; the style required generic and fulsome praise that aimed to be edifying and to eschew concrete examples. The prose pieces in this kind of composition necessitated some description of the person's career, but they avoided analysis and evaluation. The Viceroy was praised equally for things he did and for those that happened over

¹⁹ *Vari componimenti in lode dell'eccellentiss. Signore d. Francesco Benavides* (Napoli: Giuseppe Roselli, 1696).

which he had no control. The pieces for this volume were composed quickly; Vico says that he dashed off his oration in the workshop of the printer Giuseppe Roselli, the same who in 1703 clandestinely printed Grimaldi's third reply to Benedetti. We do not know how Caravita chose his twenty contributors. According to Vico his name had been suggested by Giuseppe Lucina who had taken a special interest in promoting Vico's career. Some of the men taught at the University of Naples; none of them were Jesuits, and except for Caravita none were major participants in the controversy with the Inquisition.

Vico, who was quite precise in his *Autobiography* when it comes to matters of publishing and book history, asserted that this was the first book of this type that had appeared in Naples in a good while. It is a question as to what exactly constituted the novelty in the publication. Certainly it was different from the occasional poetry that would appear in broadsides or pamphlet form that was written by an individual. Vico apparently also wished to distinguish this volume from those like the *Pompe funerale* published in 1694 by Giacomo Raillard for the death of Antonio Carafa.²⁰ Raillard appears to be the driving force behind the publication for he is the author of the dedication. This volume includes poetry, a description of the funeral and some of the sermons spoken at the event. On the surface both volumes were similar for they included occasional poetry and prose written to memorialize a life. There is good reason to believe Vico knew the volume for in 1693 Vico himself had published a memorial *canzone* soon after the news of Carafa's death reached Naples; later Vico was to be commissioned to write Carafa's official biography which he published in 1716. If Vico's memory is correct we can describe with some detail what constitutes the new genre he had in mind. It would include occasional poetry and prose in Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek and sometimes Hebrew; the volumes would be edited by a member of the lettered elite; and, they would not contain a detailed account of the religious ceremony associated with the event, nor would they include sermons spoken at the occasion. A printer lacked the social status to make a gift of such literary work.

²⁰ *Pompe funerale celebrate in Napoli nella Chiesa di S. Paolo per la morte dell'eccellentissimo signor D. Antonio Carafa della Spina*, (Napoli: Giacomo Raillard, 1694). Agnello Alessio de Blasio, a contributor of poetry, provided both the sacred and secular approval letter.

These deliberate limitations, and the refusal to include descriptions of the sacramental aspects of these events echoes the ideology of autonomous disciplines as promoted by Galilean or late baroque science. The details of an event or ceremony were not recalled. The compositions celebrated both the literary tradition of fine writing and the easy heroism and honor which baroque aristocrats claimed for themselves. They were volumes of praise. While traditionally a panegyric was delivered to a superior, in these volumes participants were not always social inferiors.

Their frequent theme was to proclaim the greater value of public good and public virtue over private interests and the personal. This kind of discourse exemplified the harmony, seen at the level of ideology not of day-to-day reality, between aristocratic patronage and the free investigation of the scholar. A wedding or a funeral, at least according to the ideology behind these volumes, was an event to promote public speech, both poetry and prose; lofty language was inspired and encouraged by the great families whose generosity made these occasions and the larger social order possible.²¹ These celebratory volumes proclaimed the hierarchical character of Neapolitan society and exalted its intellectual activity but, at the same time, they promoted a conception of social interaction where precedence and invidious distinction were submerged. In a formal sense most of these volumes accomplish this by simply arranging the poems alphabetically according to the author's first name.

For a young academic like Vico lacking an illustrious family name, such an event marked his entrance before the larger public. Although he had published before, Vico, in his *Autobiography*, asserted that it was his participation in the Santisteban book that identified him as an up and coming star in the academic world. The anonymity of the publication did not impede his recognition, his authorship must have been known to those who counted. The process of being selected to write in such a volume was a form of peer review; and this peer, or if you prefer, patronage review process was directly supported by those ruling the social and political order. The rewards and prestige gained were a clear boon to the young secular scholar seeking to make a name for himself.

²¹ Gino Benzoni, *Gli affanni della cultura: Intellettuali e potere nell'Italia della controriforma e barocca* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1978), 79–80, 100–102. Benzoni, who boldly jetisons footnotes, views these kinds of works as the base fawning of an exhausted culture.

To receive these advantages, all the author had to do was be invited to compose a poem, inscription or oration. From the point of view of an outsider to this culture these poems and orations have the sameness we associate with mass production; they seem a kind of poetic kitsch. The sentiments expressed don't challenge the reader and the virtuous accomplishments lauded may seem like mean triumphs over unworthy adversaries. The theme of the heroic and virtuous individual is repeated frequently, but it is clear that the recipients of the praise are those who rule because of their traditional authority not their ability. Yet there is no indication that a negative view was shared by the participants in these writings: no participant criticized them as base exercises, or servility. The authors seem satisfied to bask in the afterglow of their patron's virtue. These publications responded to a happy symbiosis between the needs and desires of patrons to have the social order reconfirmed, of writers committed to the idea that poetry should edify and enhance public virtue, and a reading public who accepted the convention that mortals could have fleeting contact with the divine through ceremony and celebration.²²

Publications in this new genre quickly became quite popular and represent a significant proportion of the secular books produced in Naples in the eighteenth century.²³ Vico participated in a number of these projects and was even the editor for one in 1721. The themes of these volumes were primarily the deaths and marriages of members of wealthy noble families. Like the dedications and approval letters of books, these works provide another source on the active participants in the Neapolitan intellectual community. Many of the contributing authors published nothing else; but, by noting who was involved in these volumes, it is possible to develop identities or clusters of writers who worked together and to specify groups of aristocratic patrons associated with these authors. There was a remarkable

²² Relevant here in terms of theme is Jane Newman's study of poetry in mid-seventeenth century Nuremberg. Using Vico's terms she describes their poetry "as textual events that could 'make history'". Jane O. Newman, *Pastoral Conventions: Poetry, Language, and Thought in Seventeenth-Century Nuremberg* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 70. Consider also her description of the universalizing claims of this German academy and its role as an interpretative community, pp. 252–61.

²³ In 1749, Ferdinando Galiani produced a spoof of this genre when he wrote *Componimenti vari per la morte di Domenico Jannaccone*; Jannaccone was the public hangman.

consistency of who participated with whom. These clusters correlate to an extent with more general terms like *ceto civile*, which has been used by modern researchers to identify the lawyers interested in reform of Naples' political administration and in rationalizing church-state relations. But, the groupings in the poetry volumes are more inclusive for besides the lawyers there are like minded academics and others. The study of the lists of participants provide handy clues about the relations of different groups of intellectuals, scholars, and lawyers in the city.

Perhaps financial rewards were bestowed on participants but certainly these volumes were a way to enhance prestige or reaffirm the position of the local lettered in the Neapolitan intellectual scene. The Santisteban volume was distinctive in that all the contributions were unsigned. Vico explained that this was done to prevent the envy that would have resulted if it had been known that he, an unknown at the time, was given the pride of first place in the volume.²⁴ Scepticism about this claim may be justified but it does convey something of the emotional intensity involved for those participating in these collections. For the participants these publications had an aspect of risk about them, but like most intellectual games it did not get to the level of deep play. It may be useful to think of them as occupying a function similar to the letters and reports modern academics write to thank an organization for a grant and to explain how its money was used.

The subjects being honored in these volumes, irrespective of their individual quirks, were presented as models that were not to be criticized. The purpose of such books was to instruct the people how to praise its rulers. For us these works seem trivial and boring exercises but the study of surface realities can reveal things of significance. These poetry collections are reflections on their social world. They commemorated signal events which had both public and private import; they served as secular counterparts to a religious ceremony. They were the stuffy replacement of what had once been occasions for carnivalesque behavior. It should be noted carnival was

²⁴ Giambattista Vico, *Opere* v. 5 (*L'autobiografia, il carteggio e le poesie varie*), ed. Benedetto Croce, Scrittori d'Italia, 11 (Bari: Laterza, 1911), p. 107. Mario Baglioli, "Scientific Revolution, social bricolage, and etiquette" in *The Scientific Revolution in National Context*, edited by Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 25-32, argues that anonymity was a special code related to patronage and political authority.

not excluded from notions of nobility, even at the level of ideology. Opera had been created so that even nobles could have a proper role in Carnival. The opera season took place during Carnival and there were operas staged for other public celebrations. It was an entertainment in which the upper classes separated themselves from more vulgar fun. But there was still a desire of not to be too far away from popular entertainment; this may account for the retaining of some specific Neapolitan elements in this otherwise cosmopolitan art form. In Naples tragic operas had to have comic scenes, usually sung in the local dialect, between acts.

One shouldn't be too hoity-toity about those who have the opportunity and pleasure of participating in genuine vulgarity. Confuorto tells of what must have been a marvelous party held in October of 1691 to celebrate a commoner's purchase of a noble title, he was created the Marquis of Landscron.²⁵ From the unusual amount of detail it seems that Confuorto may have been in attendance. The celebration went on for days, costing thousands of ducats. The new Marquis' palace was ablaze with torches; there was a fountain of perfumed water that ran for some seven hours around which were flying live birds; and among other treats there were 14 grand creations made of candied and fresh fruits. There were also ten instrumentalists and four singers performing under the direction of Alessandro Scarlatti. Confuorto evinces a middle class disdain for the trappings of culture purchased by easy money, and for the nobility who stuffed their pockets with food on their way out. I presume the musicians made a bundle; alas such potlatch celebrations were few; the state had all but monopolized conspicuous consumption.

But, without a doubt, the popular impression of opera is right: when the nobility brought Carnival out of the street and indoors to their palaces and theaters, it created a stuffier atmosphere than the open air Carnival. The seating in the theater placed its emphasis on the wealthy patrons who could afford a box; this served to reenforce social hierarchies and the privileges of wealth. One of Medina Coeli's major construction projects of the late 1690s employed Ferdinando Galli Bibiena, who had left Parma to redo the interior of the San Bartolomeo opera house. He replaced its two rows of boxes with five.²⁶ This expansion not only made political sense, it was fiscally

²⁵ Domenico Confuorto, *Diario*, 1, 369–370.

²⁶ Benedetto Croce, *I teatri di Napoli dal Rinascimento alla fine del secolo Decimottavo*

smart because box holders were expected to contribute generously to defray the cost of the opera company. Opera patronage imitated the world as presented in the Academy and the values repeated in the memorial volumes.

Indoor opera wasn't just a plot by baroque rulers to assert their authority. There were practical advantages too, not only was it easier to hear the music, a permanent stage allowed for the development of spectacular scenographic displays. Opera did not undercut the vitality of Carnival at least initially; it and other events would fill the piazzas of the city. The pageantry that typified baroque public celebrations were occasions for special music compositions. Confuorto's diary describes one of these public performances arranged by Medina Coeli to celebrate the Queen's birthday on July 26, 1696. Before the Royal Palace a huge amphitheater was built on which was performed Scarlatti's cantata *Il Trionfo delle Stagioni* (The Triumph of the Seasons). This was a performance of Mahlerian proportions with 150 instrumentalists and a chorus of 50; the whole construction was illuminated by some 900 torches and lanterns. As Confuorto saw it there was a huge gathering of noble lords and ladies and an "infinite number of people".²⁷ In these events the entire community was brought together, not as equal spectators, but as participants in a celebration of hierarchy which sought to image power relations of that society and to explain the justice of its different authorities and privileges.

The Arrival of Medina Coeli

The Caravita volume was written as a farewell gift to the Viceroy; the new Viceroy, the Duca di Medina Coeli, his replacement, had been serving in Rome as Spanish ambassador to the Papacy. The move from Roman ambassador to the Neapolitan viceregency was a usual step in the Spanish imperial bureaucracy. Medina Coeli had been in Rome from 1690 to 1696. Though only 36, he had clear views on the importance of the productions of a cultural community and their relation to successful political rule. At Rome, he had contact with the artistic and intellectual circle associated with Queen

(Bari: Laterza, 1966), pp. 20–21. See also, Michael F. Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan Opera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 8.

²⁷ Domenico Confuorto, *Diario*, p. v. 2, 230.

Christina. The daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, Christina had ascended to the throne of Sweden in 1644 in her eighteenth year; for a variety of reasons she chose to abdicate in 1655. In that year she travelled to Italy and in 1668 took up permanent residence in Rome in the Palazzo Doria. There she supported the production of Alessandro Scarlatti's first opera, *Gli equivoci nel sembiante* (Equivocal Appearances), and became one of his major patrons.²⁸ Besides being a great supporter of the opera she promoted a group of poets; it was under her inspiration and in her garden that the poetical association known as Arcadia was founded. After her death in 1690 fourteen men created the first of the *Accademia degli Arcadia* and the mission of the organization was to promote learned, polished and disciplined verse.²⁹ Other Arcadias appeared all over Italy and eventually 21 were formed, called *colonie* (colonies).

The name Arcadia and the idea of its forming colonies was the kind of punning classical reference that was at the heart of this organization's aesthetic. This was a veiled and erudite allusion to the account of the origins of Italy's inhabitants as recounted by Dionysius of Halicarnassus at the beginning of Book II of his *Roman Antiquities*. According to Dionysius, Arcadians from Greece had settled in southern Italy, and later Evander established an Arcadian colony on the site where Rome was to be founded. The Arcadian clubs, then, were the real Italians, their origin was prior to Rome; and like colonists their aim was to dominate the indigenous population, but instead of economic control, their authority was their mannered poetry. Gian Vincenzo Gravina, a Neapolitan cleric living in Rome, became the legislator of the organization. The political ambition of the Arcadia was to create a new Italy transformed by the power of poetry; this ambition harmonized with baroque sensibilities and the value attributed by leaders to dazzling their subjects with magnificent displays.

Medina Coeli brought with him from Rome a passion for opera and the kind of pastoral poetry associated with the Arcadians. His appointment promised to be the occasion for a reinvigoration of the

²⁸ Donald Grout, "(Pietro) Alessandro (Gaspere) Scarlatti" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 16, 549–567; and Malcolm Boyd, "(Pietro) Alessandro (Gaspere) Scarlatti" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, 4, 200–207.

²⁹ John Marino, "The State and the Shepherds in Pre-Enlightenment Naples", *Journal of Modern History*, 58 (1986), 125–42. This places the Arcadia in the context of economic thinking of the Enlightenment and identifies the very interesting contribution of Stefano di Stefano to this tradition.

cultural life of Naples. Early in his administration he built the promenade along the Chiaia which served to open up Naples' second bay from Castel dell'Ovo to Mergellina, and thus vastly expanding the area of the city. His dynamism was appreciated, and fortunately, one of those "conjunctions" occurred to him which could call forth the muse of occasional poetry. The death of Medina Coeli's mother, Caterina d'Aragona provided a wonderful opportunity for the literati to prepare a volume to memorialize the event. For this occasion a folio volume, lavish even by baroque standards was prepared.³⁰ It was over 250 pages and more than 80 individuals contributed to it. Many of the same participants are in this and the Benevides volume. It had the same printer, Giuseppe Roselli; and the guiding spirits behind it were Caravita and Federico Pappacoda. Among the participants were Giannelli, who had been arrested by the Inquisition, Nicolo Galizia whose name was involved in that investigation, as well as Giuseppe Valletta. Vico wrote for this volume as did his former employer, Domenico Rocca, whose sons Vico had tutored in their estates at Vatolla in the Cilento region.³¹ Among the participants was Sebastiano Altieri who was to be the physician of the Viceroy; and generally, those who participated were to find employment and patronage from Medina Coeli.

While in some respects it is similar to the Benevides volume, there are a couple of differences. Not unique to this volume, but deserving mention is that women were invited to participate. To be sure they come from the greatest families of the kingdom, two from the Caracciolo, and one each from the Carafa and the San Severino. Three of the four women were members of the Neapolitan Arcadia. Their contributions are grouped together, separated from their male colleagues. In most of the volumes I have examined, women do not participate; and their poetical activity is usually in conjunction with their Arcadian affiliation, shepherds, after all, needed shepherdesses. Their participation may have had an effect in terms of upper class women's self-perception in Naples. Women played an important role in Naples' intellectual and cultural communities, though their traditional role as hosts and participants in salon conversation was more common than that of patron or author.

³⁰ *Pompe funerali per la morte dell'eccellentissimo Signora D. Caterina d'Aragona* (Napoli: Giuseppe Roselli, 1697).

³¹ Benedetto Croce, *Nuove curiosità storiche* (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1922), 123–136.

In this context it is important to note in the 1690s Naples' most prestigious printer Antonio Bulifon published a series of volumes devoted to female poets.³² In 1692 he issued a new edition of Vittoria Colonna, a friend of Michelangelo, who retired to Ischia in the Bay of Naples in 1525. He printed the poems of Laura Terracina (1692–94), and in 1698 he published her attack on Ariosto's portrayal of women in *Orlando*. The following year he printed the work of her contemporary Tullia d'Aragona. That same year he issued a collection which included Lucrezia Marinella, a Venetian who argued, in the early seventeenth century, for the superiority of women over men; along with hers are poems of Veronica Gambara, Isabella della Mora and Maria Selvaggia Borghini. In 1695 he printed *Rime di cinquanta illustri poetesse* (The Poems of 50 Renowned Women Poets), and the poems of Laura Battiferri; he published her translation of the seven Penitential Psalms in 1697. In 1696 Bulifon issued an edition of the poetry of Isabella Andreini, and the last volume of this series was in 1701, some Latin works of Marta Marchini. All of this activity did not go unnoticed in the book review journals of the North. The volumes were gratefully appreciated, praised as important contributions but, to my knowledge this series was not copied elsewhere. Bulifon may well have had another motive for he certainly knew that if the succession of the Spanish throne was to be decided in the favor of the Bourbons, it would be through the female line, and Bulifon was a supporter of the Bourbons. Bulifon was also a business man and presumably this series on women writers must have sold well, otherwise why would he have continued with it? Paolo Mattia Doria, who enjoyed promoting radical theses, was to identify himself with the view that men and women were equal in intellectual capacity. He had adopted this position in response to accusations that his *La vita civile* was biased against women. And in 1716 he rectified this with a tract arguing for sexual equality. But Doria's view was, of course, a minority view.

³² Gaspare De Caro, "Bulifon, Antonio" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 15, 57–61.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ACADEMY FOUNDED BY MEDINA COELI

To formalize or institutionalize Medina Coeli's relations with the leading intellectuals of Naples, or, to be more precise, those intellectuals he favored, Medina Coeli created a learned academy which was named after himself. This in itself was fairly unusual for most Italian academies adopted off-beat names like the Frozen, or the Obtuse.¹ L'Accademia Medina Coeli, also known as L'Accademia Palatina held its first meeting on March 20, 1698 and held regular meetings, twice a month, for three, almost four years. The setting of the Academy's sessions was the majestic Palazzo Reale, an impressive palace designed by Fontana in the early seventeenth century; meetings were held in the presence of the Viceroy. Lest the members be sidetracked over issues of precedence and social standing, all sat in a large circle giving the illusion of equality.² We don't know exactly how the meetings were conducted, but lectures as well as the poetry was read at each meeting. Both Vico and Giannone describe the Medina Coeli as devoted to eloquence, learning and the restoration of letters. A substantial number of poems, over 450, remain; the poems are now in the family archive of Medina Coeli.³ Some 150 lectures have been located in a variety of manuscripts but the largest and most most significant source for the lectures is a five volume manuscript collection prepared by Niccolo Sersale in 1715.⁴ We don't

¹ For a list of these names that rivals Homers Catalogue of the Ships, see Gino Benzoni, *Gli affanni della cultura*, pp. 163–170. An interesting summary of the history of academies in Naples from the *Discordanti* of 1666 to the *Oziosi* of 1733 can be found in the *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici* (Venezia: Zane, 1738), vol. 16, 203–216, art 3 of G.B. Tafuri, "Serie cronologica".

² Guido Rispoli, *L'Accademia Palatina del Medinaceli: contributo alla storia della cultura napoletana* (Napoli: Nuovo Cultura, 1924), 5–13, 21–23. In recent years Giuseppe Ricuperati has renewed interest in the work of this academy; Giuseppe Ricuperati, "La prima formazione di Pietro Giannone: L'Accademia Medina-Coeli e Domenico Aulio", in *Saggi e ricerche sul Settecento* (Napoli: Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici, 1968), pp. 94–171. This is now chapter one of his *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone*.

³ Michele Rak, "Le 'Rime' dell'Accademia di Medinacoeli", *Bolletino del Centro di Studi Vichiani*, (1974), 4, 148–159.

⁴ "L'Accademia di Medina Coeli. Delle lezioni accademiche de'diverse valen-

know how Sersale came to possess copies of the lectures, what percentage his collection represents of the number delivered, nor his reasons for compiling it. Perhaps he was inspired to prepare his collection after the publication by Raillard in 1714 of a new edition of the transactions of the Accademia del Cimento. This juxtaposition is a telling contrast because the lectures of the Medina Coeli contain none of the experimental work that characterized the Cimento. Instead of that kind of research, the vast majority of the scientific papers at the Medina Coeli were summaries of information taken from Pliny, Strabo, and other ancient sources. Another motive for preparing the collection may be that Gregorio Caloprese died in 1714. He was one of the inspirations behind the academy and perhaps Sersale intended the collection to be in his memory.⁵

No complete list of the members has been located, though we know the authorship of most of the lectures and of two-thirds of the poetry. We have no clear idea how many attended but did not speak. Of the eighty authors who participated in the 1697 memorial volume, we find some 25 who read at the Academy. With the exception of two scientists, Luca'Antonio Porzio and Antonio Monforte, all the Academicians participated in the memorial volume. Several important members of Naples' intellectual community were not invited to participate in either activity. Among those excluded was Benedetti, though this should scarcely raise any eyebrows; it may be more of a surprise not to find Nicola Partenio Giannetasio, whose poetry and scientific work echoed the approach of the Academy. It seems that Medina Coeli had a thing about Jesuits. Even more curious was the absence of Costantino Grimaldi; but if my reconstruction of when his work against Benedetti actually became known in Naples is correct, he would not have come to public attention until August, 1701, about when the Academy closed. And prior to this he either lacked the patronage connections or chose not to participate in the memorial volumes. Amato Danio and Serafino Biscardi, ma-

tuomini de nostri tempi recitate avanti l'ecc. Duca di Medina Coeli Vice Ré che fu del Regno di Napoli copiate dall'originale, che si conserva presso il Signor D. Niccoli Sersale", BNN MSS XIII B 69-73; for the most complete listing of the manuscripts see Michele Rak, "Le 'lezioni dell'Accademia di Medina Coeli'. La tradizione manoscritta" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo* ed. Raffaele Ajello (Napoli: Jovene, 1980), 659-689.

⁵ Sersale was an illustrious member of the Augustinian order; for his biography, see Giannicola Chiesa, *Vita del padre Niccola Sersale dell'Ordine Eremitano di S. Agostino, ristoratore della Congregazione di S. Giovanni a Carbonara di Napoli* (Napoli, 1745).

jor participants in the Inquisition controversy, were not included, and yet Biscardi was the man who first brought a copy of Marchetti's translation of Lucretius to Naples.⁶ Domenico Aulisio, the instructor of civil law at the University, author of a book of essays on Greek antiquities, and reputed to know not only the usual languages of scholarship but also Hebrew and Arabic was not a member. In 1694 Aulisio published with Giacomo Raillard a series of learned essays on ancient culture and city planning. His work received prompt notice in the November 1694 issue of the *Acta Eruditorum*. That he was not a member of the Academy was probably a consequence of a violent controversy he had had with Leonardo di Capoa concerning Di Capoa's theory about the rainbow.⁷ Local reputations and quarrels, as to be expected, were more important than impartially recognizing contributions to knowledge. Another young scholar, Matteo Egizio, does not appear to have been a member, though he had been a member of the shortlived academy called the *Oziosi* (The Lazy Bums) founded in 1693, which had included among its members many who went on to the Medina Coeli. At that Academy he had presented a paper in Latin, *De ambiguitate scientiarum* (mentioned in the third chapter) on the uncertainty of knowledge, a theme explored by Giuseppe Lucina at the Medina Coeli, and by Vico in his early inaugural lectures of the same period.

In his description of the Naples of 1698 the great French Benedictine scholar of Greek and Latin paleography and antiquities, Bernard de Montfauçon, made no mention of the Academy in his *Diarium Italicum*.⁸ Montfauçon arrived in Naples on October 24, 1698 and left after November 8. He met with Valletta, studied in his library, travelled up Vesuvius with Antonio Bulifon, who did more than almost anyone to promote Neapolitan scholars and writers to a wider audience. He records whom he met but makes no mention of the Academy which probably met during his more than two week stay; no one seemed to talk about it with him. Confuorto noted the inaugural

⁶ At least this is what Bartolomeo Intieri wrote Magliabecchi, *Lettere dal Regno*, p. 713.

⁷ Domenico Aulisio, *Opuscula: de gymnasii constructione, Mausolei architectura, Harmonia Timaeica, et Numeris medicis* (Napoli: Giacomo Raillard, 1694). The work acquired a European reputation and it was reprinted in 1719. The best account of the rainbow controversy is that of Max Fisch, "The Academy of Investigators" in *Science, Medicine, and History: Essays on the Evolution of Scientific Thought and Medical Practice Written in Honor of Charles Singer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953) 1, 521-563.

⁸ Bernard de Montfauçon, *Diarium Italicum* (Paris: J. Anisson, 1702).

meeting of the Academy in his diary, but did not attend. Several of Magliabecchi's regular correspondents were members of the academy, but they don't mention its activities in their letters. Perhaps the Florentine librarian was only interested in books printed in Naples, not the other ephemera associated with the intellectual community. Joseph Addison visited Naples in the spring of 1701, and he also made no mention of an academy, or for that matter of any intellectual life in the city at all. From his *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* we might conclude that he did not come into contact with any Neapolitans of interest or note for he mentions none. He despised the popular religious festivities of the Neapolitans, but, for reasons he does not explain, he stayed longer in Naples than he had anticipated. The primary purpose of the *Remarks* seemed to have been to juxtapose landscapes and ancient statuary with appropriate translations from Latin verse. He knew Burnet's *Travels*, but we get no mention of Valletta or his library. One may begin to wonder if the purpose of the Academy was not to promote but *isolate* the free spirits of this intellectual scene. From this evidence it seems that the freewheeling intellectual community of 1685 was not as evident to visitors at the cusp of the seventeenth century.

Gemelli Careri sounds like just the man to give a fascinating lecture or series of them but his kind of experience didn't seem to fit with the kinds of talks done at the Medina Coeli. Given this lengthy description of what and who were excluded from the Medina Coeli it may be a bit disappointing to actually examine who was included and what was produced. The Academy was typical of many Italian academies of the period which yielded no major accomplishments. There are no papers, for example, to rival that delivered at the Archdeacon's Academy in Bologna by Giovanni Domenico Guglielmini. This paper, presented March 21, 1688, concerned the crystallization of salts and is a landmark in the history of crystallography.⁹

The most active participant in the Medina Coeli would appear to be Sersale; this may be expected since he gathered the lectures together and must have ready access to all of his. Giuseppe Valletta delivered 9; the men Vico associated with his own advancement, Giuseppe Lucina, Niccolò Caravita and Federigo Pappacoda deliv-

⁹ Howard B. Adelman, *Marcello Malpighi and the Evolution of Embryology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), v. 1, 104. Guglielmini's correspondance with Cristofaro was mentioned in chapter 2.

ered 7, 8, and 9 respectively. Vico himself gave only one lecture. There were two new figures who gave a surprising number of lectures. One was Agostino Ariani, in his mid-twenties, who spoke on mathematics; he was to hold the chair in that subject at the University of Naples. Ariani published some mathematical work, and his remarks at the Academy indicate an appreciation for the contributions made by Newton. But the most important figure to emerge at the Medina Coeli was Paolo Mattia Doria. Of Genoese origin, Doria had come to Naples in the hope of acquiring a family inheritance that was in contention. His success with his own law case gave him an ample fortune and his experiences in Naples disposed him to stay on. He delivered 10 lectures; the best of these ideas found a place in his first book *La vita civile* (The Public Sphere), published in 1710.

Contemporary scholars, looking for origins of the ideas and accomplishments of Vico and Giannone have promoted the Medina Coeli as an important moment in their development. Perhaps because they resemble academic conference papers, the Academy has been seen as providing an unusual opportunity for the exchange of ideas and a chance to meet like minded individuals. Hence Donzelli claims the Academy as marking Vico's entrance into the Neapolitan intellectual scene—despite Vico's own statement about the role of the Benevides volume; Suppa asserts that it was there that Vico began his close friendship with Doria, although they had both participated in the memorial volume for Medina Coeli, and earlier were at the Academy of the *Oziosi*.¹⁰ This emphasis on the Medina Coeli devalues the importance that poetry had for this intellectual world and anachronistically promotes the academic lectures as the more important. Ricuperati, who began the reassessment of the Medina Coeli gives a more balanced account, perhaps because his emphasis was the career of Giannone rather than that of Vico.¹¹

The subject matter of the lectures seemed to touch all aspects of human inquiry. There were papers on the origins of pearls and gall stones, reflections on definition five of the Sixth Book of Euclid's *Elements*, an essay on Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, duelling, and the

¹⁰ Maria Donzelli, *Natura e humanitas nel giovane Vico* (Napoli: Istituto Italiano per gli studi storici in Napoli, 1970), p. 31; Silvio Suppa, *L'Accademia di Medinacoeli: fra tradizione Investigante e nuova scienza civile* (Napoli: Istituto Italiano per gli studi storici in Napoli, 1971), p. 175.

¹¹ Giuseppe Ricuperati, "A proposito dell'Accademia Medina Coeli", *Rivista storica italiana*, 84, (1972), 57–79.

cause of love. Given the descriptions both Vico and Giannone give of Neapolitan intellectual life at this time one might expect these conference papers to show something of the faddish behavior of scholars rushing from being Cartesians to supporters of Gassendi. But there is very little of this. In fact the primary interest of the Academy, judged by the topics of the papers, was history. 52 of the lectures in Sersale's collection are biographies of Roman emperors: these were delivered in 1699.¹² There were other lectures that dealt with republican Rome, ancient Greece, and the ancient kingdoms of the Near East. The reasons for this interest in history, especially that of imperial Rome may derive from Naples' political circumstances.¹³ It was evident that the monarchy of the Spanish Hapsburgs was coming to an end. Charles had no children and no potential heir had such a claim to the throne that would not be contested by the military forces of his rivals. And the comparison of imperial Rome and imperial Spain had been a common place of sixteenth century political commentary. In less than a century Spain had collapsed, and thus we might imagine these Neapolitans as studying the causes of imperial failure. Caution is perhaps advisable; most of the lectures concerned the emperors of the first century and a half of the Empire. These lectures basically rehash the well known accounts of Suetonius, Tacitus and Cassius Dio, only a handful of emperors are discussed from the second and third centuries. The primary source for these was the *Historiae Augustae*; the last mentioned were Philip and Decius who ruled in the middle years of the third century, long before the Empire collapsed. Typically, the fundamental of these analyses was to relate elements of a ruler's character to the success or failure of his reign. Their model for good historical writing was Tacitus, especially his masterful studies of the varying shades of human wickedness exemplified by the lives of Rome's first emperors.¹⁴

¹² Guido Rispoli, *L'Accademia Palatina del Medinacoeli: contributo alla storia della cultura napoletana* (Napoli: "Nuova Cultura", 1924), p. 30. Sersale's collection of 52 lectures is in volume XIII B 72. It is tempting to regard this as representing a year of lectures, and to see the imperial theme as its special topic. Unfortunately for this hypothesis, other lectures on Emperors have been found that would appear part of the series.

¹³ Dino Carpanetto and Giuseppe Ricuperati, *Italy in the Age of Reason, 1685-1789*, trans. by Caroline Higgitt (NY: Longman, 1987), pp. 82-83.

¹⁴ Another ground for hesitating and concluding too much from this series is, as the saying goes, writing on the Roman emperors seemed to be in the air. In 1701, under the encouragement of Bishop Burnet, William Wootton published some mediocre parallel lives of emperors in his *The history of Rome from the death of Antoninus*

The purpose of such an historical analysis was to explain the causes of success and failure, not to find examples of right or wrong. The "Tacitist" movement of the sixteenth century had been strongly influenced by the thought of Machiavelli and his promotion of Cesare Borgia as a model for the behavior of a new leader establishing his power. For the "Black Tacitists" of the sixteenth century the classic comparison was between the dark, ambiguous personality of Tiberius and Borgia's amoral rise to power.¹⁵ The continuing influence of this analysis can be seen in Filippo Anastasio's Medina Coeli lectures on Tiberius. He regards Tiberius as a "new prince" and makes the typical comparison of Borgia and Tiberius. While he saw Tiberius as possessing some outstanding virtues these were compromised by his ignorance of natural philosophy. This ignorance degenerated into the superstition of astrology which made him fearful of the influences of the planets. He repeats the Tacitist conviction that passion and vice underlie political life. Anastasio was no Machiavellian; he was an ecclesiastic who became a bishop and published an attack on Giannone's *Istoria civile*. His life of Tiberius shows how the attitudes of Machiavelli, through the influence of Tacitism, pervaded the study of history.

Giuseppe Valletta's lecture on the life of Pertinax, emperor for the first three months of 193, is typical of the lectures which could not rely on Tacitus. Valletta essentially repeats the view of his primary source, Capitolinus, who portrays Pertinax's reign as a conflict between the ruler's virtue and the vices of the soldiers. Valletta presents Pertinax as a prudent and virtuous leader who was destroyed by the violence of his time rather than by a fault in himself. The austerity of Pertinax's character, a marked contrast to the preceding licentious reign of Commodus, alienated the debauched spirits of his soldiers. His moral virtue appeared as weakness to the members of the Praetorian Guard; they feared that his promised military reforms would mean a return to work. According to Valletta, Pertinax made a mistake the first day of his reign by rebuking the indolence of the Guard; the rest was a repetition of the tragic conflict between the good man and the armed mob.

Pius to the death of Severus Alexander. It exhibits a scholarly level similar to the Medina Coeli project.

¹⁵ Giuseppe Toffanin, *Machiavelli e il "tacitismo": la politica storia al tempo della contro-riforme* (Padova: Draghi, 1921), pp. 31–55, 143–67. Arnaldo Momigliano, *The classical foundations of modern historiography*, (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1990), 122–131.

One curious thing about the Medina Coeli history lectures is the absence of references to contemporary historical research. This is surprising given the outstanding work in ancient history appearing regularly in France since the 1680s. Louis Cousin, who had translated the historians of the Late Roman Empire into French, promoted this kind of research in his role as editor, from 1687–1702, of the major Catholic book review journal of the period, *Journal des savans*. In 1692 Tillemont published his masterpiece of erudition and historical judgement, the *Histoire des empereurs*; but the members of the Medina Coeli make no mention of it. Granted awareness of, or at least the generous spirit needed to cite, up to date scholarship isn't the only mark of a sophisticated intellectual community. But given the later contributions of Vico and Giannone to historical method in the 1720s, the emphasis on history at the Medina Coeli is of more than passing interest. It seems safe to presume some knew of these sources, even if they made no use of them; but, because of the limited public being addressed, the revelation of how or what foreign scholars they had consulted was not appropriate or necessary. It should be noted that at this time, while some scholars in some fields regularly cited the "literature", this was by no means universally, or even true of the majority.

More of the Medina Coeli lectures were devoted to history than to any other subject. Almost 60% of the papers delivered were devoted to the historical study of antiquity, only about 20% concerned mathematics and the natural sciences, the remainder concerned politics, and political theory and 8% were on humanities topics. This is in marked contrast to the kinds of books published in Naples and the traditions of previous Neapolitan academies. There is scarcely any paper which exemplifies the kind of experimental science associated with the *Cimento*, the Galilean tradition, and the *Investiganti*, the academy founded in Naples by Cornelio. The scientific papers are most often summations of the views of ancient writers on some topic. And, it should be noted that the papers on historical topics, likewise, are summaries of the accounts of ancient historians, they are not research into specific problems.

The Academy lectures are not of particular interest in terms of their contents, but they do indicate changing intellectual concerns. Despite the different circumstances of their origin and purpose there is some point to contrasting them with the papers concerning the Inquisition. In that collection I noted a range of views on the issues

of historical interpretation and of natural law. Among the Medina Coeli lectures there were several which investigate matters of political theory. The Academy lectures gave an opportunity for a more direct investigation of the principles associated with civil society than did the Inquisitorial papers. At the Medina Coeli certain authors discuss the comparative importance of virtue and the more abstract principles of natural law as ways of justifying political authority. While there are significant differences, the authors agree that social conflict and popular revolt will not produce a successful, stable society. Prudent change, intelligent and needed reform or modifications of civil society can only be brought about by an enlightened administrator. (This stance, it should be noted, is the opposite of that of the Vico of the *New Science* who connected significant social change with popular revolution). Nicolo Sersale, the compiler of the Medina Coeli lectures shared these expectations of change from above; this can be inferred from the seven lectures he gave on the history of Rome going from Romulus through the Emperor Julian. Successful rulers are those who increase public trust by a just and rigorous application of the laws; decline results when governmental offices are sold, justice can be bought, and when the army or armies supposedly protecting the empire claim the right to elect their own ruler. In his final lecture on the end of the Roman Empire he lists among the causes of its decline the haughty indifference of rulers who permit the introduction of novel and foreign customs in civil procedure.¹⁶ In this Sersale was implicitly approving the principle followed by the Spanish viceroys who resisted innovation in the Inquisitorial courts. This approach also supported the specialness claimed by legists and antiquarians throughout Europe whether it be for the Common Law, or the traditions of a province or city.

Granted that we know very little about the principles of organization behind Sersale's Medina Coeli manuscript collection, nevertheless, we may be justified in giving special emphasis to the fact that it begins with four lectures on the origins of empires by Gregorio Caloprese.¹⁷ Caloprese could be seen as giving a theoretical foundation for the historical lectures; and, specifically, his principles develop a political philosophy that seems consonant with the beliefs

¹⁶ BNN MSS XIII B 70, ll. 129v-130r.

¹⁷ Amedeo Quondam, "Caloprese, Gregorio", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 16, 801-805.

of Sersale. Caloprese was the organizer of a school whose curriculum was a combination of the philosophy and writing of the ancients and the moderns. He taught the physics and mathematics of Descartes, the philosophy of Plato, and the poetry of Homer, Vergil, Dante, and Tasso.¹⁸ Among his students were Pietro Metastasio, the most famous librettist of the eighteenth century, and Francesco Maria Spinelli, Principe della Scalea, who wrote a defense of Descartes' philosophy against the criticism of Paolo Mattia Doria in the 1730s.

Caloprese was a follower of Descartes and believed that his theory proved the most important truths about human nature. Its fundamental principle separated mind and body; this guaranteed an autonomy to the individual will and the individual's role as a moral agent. For the political philosopher this raised the question of how to relate private desires and drives felt by individuals and to turn them into good actions and public virtues. As Caloprese well knew one approach based on a vigorous individualism had been proposed by a group of thinkers he dispraisingly called the "new politicians", *i novelli politici*. Although he calls them new, he only mentions their ancient counterparts, Epicurus and Lucretius, though he clearly has in mind theories like those of Hobbes, Spinoza and Pufendorf. Caloprese adopted the mannerism, followed by others at the Medina Coeli, of framing all intellectual controversy in the oppositions of the philosophic schools of antiquity.

While both Caloprese and the *novelli politici* began their political theorizing with a conception of the solitary individual, his opponents deny the presence or importance of divine providence in shaping human values. According to them, people, left to their own devices will follow the drives of self-preservation and self-love seeking only their own survival. This continual struggle will only cease when they are compelled to submit to the will of a stronger man who can compel them to do his will. As Caloprese saw it, this vision of the state of nature and of civil society were equally horrible. The attempt to explain social organization as simply the consequence of fear and utility was too narrow and couldn't account for the enormous num-

¹⁸ Raffaele Cotugno, *Gregorio Caloprese* (Trani: Vecchi e C., 1910), 33-34. Cotugno has suggested that this program of studies fulfills the requirements of the educational program promoted by Vico in his 1709 lecture *De Nostri temporis studiorum ratione*. Enrico Nuzzo, *Verso la "Vita civile": Antropologia e politica nelle lezioni accademiche di Gregorio Caloprese e Paolo Mattia Doria* (Napoli: Guida, 1984) argues for the importance of Caloprese and especially his centrality for Doria's intellectual development.

ber of examples of self-sacrifice and heroism which fill the annals of every nation. These theorists did not consider the spiritual aspects of human nature; these principles are love and charity which find their natural expression in the unities of family, community and nation. Love is a constant presence teaching and encouraging the practice of virtue. And love does not arise from the body, for bodily feelings disappear when a need is satisfied. "These are the inclinations that lodge in man as a spiritual substance, which, if they were not suffocated and oppressed by contrary inclinations which we have as corporeal substances, composed as we are of mind and body, the world would be a happier place than it is".¹⁹ In Caloprese's view the Cartesian mind/body distinction supported his attempt to justify a political theory based on Christian love.

In certain respects his analysis was a recasting of St. Augustine's political thought about love into Cartesian language. And, in other respects, he was following Grotius who accepted the stoic principle that we have a natural desire to love society for its own sake, and not for reasons of self-interest. As Caloprese saw it, despite our sinfulness the mind preserved a core of decency, and not even the worst men become the selfish solitaires required by *i novelli politici* in their hypothesis of a state of nature. Caloprese believed that Descartes' idea of mind insured the autonomy of its activity, and gave it some power to restrain bodily lusts. This was the basis for moral actions, the ability of the mind to overpower bodily inclinations, and explained our natural tendency to be generous to each other. Caloprese conceived the state as repeating the characteristics of this mind/body split. Ideally, the state would be ruled by one person whose authority would control and direct the passionate and violent natures of the citizens. The virtue, self-control and rationality of the ruling principle would encourage the spirit of love found in each individual to express the feelings of patriotism and fraternity. Having worked out his view of the individual soul, Caloprese thought that the remainder of his argument, that is the building of great states and empires could be easily deduced. He implied at the end of his fourth essay that he had a lot more to say on the matter, but no more lectures by him given at the Academy survive.

Not all of the academicians joined Caloprese's attack on *i novelli politici*. Nicolo Capasso, a lawyer, not yet 30, gave a partial defense

¹⁹ BNN MSS XIII B 69, l. 30r.

of their position in a lecture entitled “Se la ragion di stato possa derogare alla legge naturale” (Can the authority of the state rightly transgress natural law?). At the Academy he also spoke on the question of investiture and gave four lectures on Roman emperors. In his lecture on political theory Capasso implicitly criticized Caloprese for not making certain crucial distinctions. Although he mentioned no names he makes an argument that differentiated the views of Grotius, Hobbes and Pufendorf from those of Spinoza. The enemy was not modern theory as such but those who do not distinguish between “natural law and the law of reason, that is, the law of the natural universe from the natural law of man”.²⁰ The dangerous view was that of Spinoza who had asserted that there was no special law governing human behavior other than the general laws of nature. While Capasso granted that there are general laws of nature which justify self-preservation, he believed there were particular rules which we understand by the light of reason which have been impressed on our mind by God.²¹ Spinoza, he thought, had not distinguished between the compulsion, force and necessity that directed the natural world, and, the free and rational opportunities available to human beings.

Capasso, in distinguishing the law of reason from the law of nature, gave reason a moral character that resembled Caloprese’s position. In opposition to the position of Spinoza he concluded that our moral and political character existed separately from the natural world and the deterministic laws that govern it. He insists that political thinkers should not confuse or regard as interchangeable the ideas of law and right. Right indicated an opportunity to act; law meant constraint. In this he was repeating Hobbes.²² He explained how individuals laid down or transferred, *traferiscano*, their rights to their sovereign. As he understood it, the character of this transfer of rights was total, thus the answer to the question of his title was a clear yes, sovereign power, *ragion di stato*, could impinge on natural law. The subject yielded the right of self-defense to their ruler and had no right to resist punishment or even a death sentence. (Hobbes would at least allow the condemned individual the right to try to escape,

²⁰ BNN MSS XIII B 73, ll. 23v–24r.

²¹ BNN MSS XIII B 73, ll. 23v–24r.

²² Perez Zagorin, “Cudworth and Hobbes on is and ought” in *Philosophy, science, and religion in England 1640–1700*, ed. Richard Kroll, Richard Ashcraft, Perez Zagorin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 128–148, esp. 133.

because the civil authority had placed that person back in the state of nature). As Capasso makes explicit in his lecture, this meant that arguments that attempted to privilege feudal law, to remove it from sovereign authority on the grounds that feudal law was derived from private law, were false. In other words the sovereign has the right to interfere with, to alter, the succession to a feudal inheritance. Lawyers who denied this right were simply wrong.

Some at the Medina Coeli disagreed with this view; that seems the purpose behind the lecture delivered by Tomaso D'Aquino, Principe di Castiglione entitled "Lezioni intorno alla ragion delle genti" (Lecture concerning the rights of peoples).²³ Although a noble, he was a well respected member of this intellectual community. Francesco D'Andrea had dedicated his two defenses of Di Capoa to D'Aquino; D'Aquino recited 18 poems at the Academy and was a participant in the Medina Coeli memorial volume. In his lecture, D'Aquino stated that a prince could not take away the rights of a community. In this his argument repeats one general line taken up with the Inquisition controversy. The rights D'Aquino has in mind concern a conception of natural law in which people accept, trust and try to live within an environment which promotes cooperation. His political principles, unlike the abstract values of Capasso, were founded in the specific situation of Neapolitan politics. As his fundamental term he chose *la ragion delle genti* (the right of peoples); *ragion*, has the implication of a right that justifies itself because it is reasonable, and does not use Capasso's language of *ius* or *diritto* (*ius gentium* or *il diritto delle genti*) with its more neutral notion of a right that is a claim. Capasso basically dismissed the term, the rights of peoples, as insignificant; he regarded *jus delle genti* as a highfalutin name for *la legge civile*, civil law. In this Capasso was following the lead of the students of Vitoria, the great Spanish legist of the middle sixteenth century. It may be worth noting in this context that the title of Vico's first edition of the *New Science* of 1725 included the phrase *diritto naturale delle genti* as part of the title; in the second edition of 1730 and the third of 1744 this phrase is dropped. The titles of the later editions give greater emphasis to the "common nature of the nations" than to their legal status. In his 1720 *Sinopsi del diritto universale* (Synopsis of universal law), Vico echoed Capasso when among his postulates he stated that *jus civile* was a collection of *ius gentium*.

²³ BNN MSS XIII B 73, ll. 105r-111r.

Capasso conceded none of the spirit of cooperation suggested by D'Aquino and Caloprese; indeed, he, with what I take to be serious intent, paralleled the Inquisition, which violated natural law by punishing the son for the sins of the father, with his argument about the sovereign's right to encroach on an individual's claim to natural law. He concluded his lecture explaining the famous story of King Ahab who had Naboth murdered when Naboth refused to sell his vineyard to the king. Naboth had refused to sell his patrimony, but as Capasso saw it, Ahab's action was unjust only because he was motivated by lust and passion, not a concern for the state. Ahab had not violated natural law, since as a ruler he could do that with impunity, but in Capasso's view he had violated divine law because Joshua had assigned land in Israel not based on human law but on the authority of God. (Hobbes, in this case, saw no injustice nor injury to Naboth, though he granted a claim might be made that Ahab had injured God). Capasso would concede that Divine Law might still have some authority in human interactions. By not reducing all laws to human ones, he affirmed there was a divine law which could not be equated to the rights of the state or the sovereign authority.

Besides issues of political theory a few of the lectures concern topics directly related to the interpretation of Scripture. What is of interest, again, is not a new insight but the vocabulary used and the approach taken to these issues. Niccolò Galizia, who had been among those mentioned in the Inquisitorial investigation for his teaching of the atomic theory, addressed some of the problems arising when theological interpretation of the Bible were confused with scientific research. He pointed out that certain Fathers of the Church had extrapolated from Scripture and pagan authors to reach conclusions that subsequent discovery had proved not to be the case. For example it was now known that human life could be sustained at and below the equator, and, despite the claims of some early Christian writers, the earth was a sphere. More to the point was the unanticipated existence of the American continent and their habitation by a people not mentioned in Genesis when the populating of the earth was explained. The ill-considered statements made by certain Fathers of the Church which claimed to pronounce authoritatively about the shape of the earth and its geography must be revised. If not, he argued, it must be conceded that Adam was not the progenitor of the human race but of only part of it; and that these inhabitants of

the Americas derived from a separate creation. In other words, by using the Bible, or rather a certain interpretation of its text, as a guide to investigating natural science the Church Fathers had inadvertently endorsed the heretical pre-Adamite hypothesis of Isaac de La Peyrère.²⁴ Galizia's conclusion was not to support the pre-Adamite view but to show the danger of mixing the disciplines of natural science and theology.

Another paper that dealt with a similar problem was given by Vico's special patron, Giuseppe Lucina; the paper was called "Dello Scemamento del mondo" (On the Decline of the Earth). He speculated on whether the earth was losing its vital energies. He noted that the amazing life-spans given to the Patriarchs could result from a different calendar system, but he found that idea unpersuasive. As he saw it the large bones occasionally found in the earth indicated that the race of Giants mentioned in Genesis had at one time walked the earth; their disappearance argued that some kind of fecundity had disappeared. The vitality represented by their massive form may have come from the earth itself; or, he suggests another possibility, that the particularly pure air that the world must have experienced right after Noah's Flood encouraged their growth. Lucina cited Lucretius to support his interpretation that the earth's innate fecund power had weakened over time. While he understood there were pitfalls to using a writer of Lucretius' dubious reputation he readily accepted his method of using naturalistic principles to even explain what had seemed to be miraculous in Scripture.

On a related theme Lucina presented two lectures concerning the Assyrians, the first discussed their philosophy, the second their practice of divination. The Assyrians, he said, believed that human beings, nature, and even the gods were trapped in iron laws of fate. Even though their religion denied free will, the people did not despair or become voluptuaries as have their modern successors, the followers of Islam. In fact, he noted the Assyrians' acceptance of determinism prompted them to study mathematics and to measure the motions of the stars and planets. According to him the Assyrians believed in a sun centered universe. They also accepted the theory

²⁴ Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac la Peyrère (1596-1676): his life, work and influence* (Leiden: Brill, 1987); and also Richard Popkin, "The development of religious scepticism and the influence of Isaac la Peyrère's pre-Adamism and Bible criticism" in *Classical Influences on European culture AD 1500-1700*, ed. R.R. Bolgar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976) 271-280.

of atoms and they had a conception of the immortality of the soul distinct from the Egyptian belief in metempsychosis. Their notion of the soul was one that only concerned the human being and the divine. In this Lucina echoed themes already developed in the *Giannestadius*; his lecture seems to suggest a clandestine meditation supportive of the Cartesian mind/body position and its denial of souls and of spiritual consciousness to animals.²⁵

At the time of the *Medina Coeli* Lucina's work may have been understood as a Cartesian view but later readers considered it part of the libertine tradition. In 1742 these essays were thought interesting enough to print in volume 6 of the *Miscellanea di varie operette* in Venice.²⁶ The printed text makes a few significant alterations from that in Sersale's volume. The changes suggest that the context in which discussions of metempsychosis were understood in the 1690s had altered by the 1740s. How the work travelled to Venice isn't completely clear but in May of 1741 Paolo Maria Paciaudi wrote to Matteo Egizio to clarify the authorship of these pieces on the Assyrians. Paciaudi, a Theatine and an educational reformer, knew these lectures were part of a group of essays dated 1698; and the subject could fit well in the *Miscellanea* volumes which published articles, letters and essays. No author was indicated in the manuscript, hence Paciaudi sent off a letter to Egizio thinking he might give him the information.²⁷ If I am right that Egizio was not a member of the *Medina Coeli* the fact that no reply letter exists may not be surprising; Egizio may not have known and he may simply have refused to answer questions on what brought back an ancient snub. It is not known how it was decided, but the published volumes attribute these two lectures to Domenico Aulisio; Aulisio, as far as I can tell, gave no lectures nor attended these meetings. Nevertheless, by mid-century he seemed the most plausible author to scholars in Venice. After all

²⁵ Giuseppe Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone*, pp. 10–16, argues that Lucina is reflecting on the ideas of Spinoza. In this Ricuperati is following Nicola Badaloni, *Introduzione a G.B. Vico* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1961), pp. 196–199. While this is possible, it seems to me that throughout the essays Lucina supports the idea of a distinction of two substances rather than the single substance of Spinoza. Souls partake of the world soul, a notion that does not necessitate Spinoza's view.

²⁶ *Miscellanea di varie operette* (Venezia: Bettinelli, 1742) art. 7. This was the last volume of this series. On this publication see Michele Rak, "Le lezioni dell'Accademia *Medina Coeli*", in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, 680–689.

²⁷ G. Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone*, pp. 10–12.

Aulisio had published a work on the cultural and intellectual communities of the Hebrews and early Christians and it would make sense that his interests might include other areas of the Near East.

The Medina Coeli lectures show the continued vitality of local communication among scholars in Naples. Sersale's five volume collection was certainly prepared with manuscript circulation in mind. A number of other individual manuscript lectures have survived as well; Sersale had conceived his work as a kind of memorial to the academy. If the function of the original papers was to praise the patron of the organization and to make him, in accord with the flattery of the age, their author, this was accomplished in respect to the institutions reputation. Much of the vitality associated with Baroque ephemera, was contained in its original performance, what we have left is the mere text. The intellectual virtuosity is was what Vico and Giannone remembered about the Academy not its scientific content. One problem with sorting out the remnants of such contributions can be seen in the confusion that faced Paciaudi just 40 years later. The problem with the survival of manuscript knowledge in the midst of print culture is that so much depends on the memory of details and fleeting experiences.

become known, did not accomplish his purpose, nor did the marriage offer much joy. His continuing life thwarted the plans of those who anticipated his death; he outlived projected successors and many who had plotted to partition the Spanish Empire.

It seemed the infant Electoral Prince of Bavaria, born in 1698, would succeed to the throne, at least that was the agreement between Louis XIV and William III, ruler of Holland and England. The child's sudden death in 1699 ended this possibility. The remaining heirs meant a choice between the families of the Austrian Hapsburgs or of the Bourbons, an impossible alternative. Charles died on November 1, 1700 and willed his kingdom to Philip of Anjou, a grandson of Louis XIV. Louis chose to recognize the will and early in 1701 Louis sent French troops into the Spanish Netherlands. The territory so vigorously disputed in the previous war, the Nine Years War, fell into French hands; the complex system of Dutch garrisons occupying fortified areas in this region which had been arranged by the peace treaty at Rijswijk in 1697 came to naught, for the Dutch decided not to fight. On September 16, 1701, England's displaced sovereign, James II, died; Louis promptly proclaimed his recognition of James' son as the rightful English king. Louis, having offended Austria, and then the Dutch and now the English, made war inevitable, though this time Spain was on the side of France.

In Naples the news of Charles' death arrived on November 20, 1700; this followed the bad news at the end of September, that the Neapolitan pope Innocent XII had died. The opera season which had begun in November was cancelled. In the language of the time there was an outpouring of universal mourning. Not the least would be the moanings of the singers and musicians whose contracts were declared void.² Worse was the prospect of a carnival season without opera; only Spanish mourning could require such sacrifice. Was there to be no singing in the theaters? Well then musical comedy would move back outside to the large public space in front of the Angevine castle. There Neapolitans could hear their music presented under the cover of the puppet theater. The musicians were concealed by a

² Medina Coeli asked Maria Maddalena Musi who had expected to sing three operas that season to stay on until the summer. She refused to do this unless she was given her anticipated salary and a supplement; Medina Coeli responded by paying her a third of her pay and ordering her out of town in four hours. Eventually a kind of accommodation was reached. See John Rosselli, *Singers of Italian Opera*, p. 22.

CHAPTER SIX

THE END OF SPANISH HAPSBURG RULE IN NAPLES

Since the late fifteenth century the political life of Naples was controlled by Spain; its connections with the kingdom of Aragon went back even further. The fortune of Naples had risen with that of Spain and it suffered with it in its decline in the seventeenth century. Imperial failure need not correlate, as in the recent example of the Soviet Union, with a deluded, blundering, inefficient or corrupt administration. Braudel, his followers, and other historians have argued persuasively that the post-Renaissance decline of the Mediterranean world was due more to the lay of the land than any failure of nerve, of vision blinkered by ideology, or of a weakening of the joints in the Spanish or, for that matter, the Ottoman Empires. The accomplishment and trials of early modern Spain have been the subject of new studies and assessments. Naples has been the beneficiary of this change of historiographical fortunes; Neapolitan and other historians have re-evaluated the limits and successes of the Spanish rule of southern Italy.¹

The very practical problem of Spanish royal succession consumed a large amount of Spain's productive energy at the end of the seventeenth century. Charles II, born in 1661 came to the throne with the death of his father Philip IV in 1664. Many were amazed that Charles lived as long as he did; he was continuously ill and considered deformed. Yet he must have had amazing reserves of strength, for despite continuous medical attention he survived almost forty years. It was inevitable that he marry and at first he was coupled with Maria Louisa Bourbon; their union produced no off-spring. Her death in 1689 required that the marital experiment be tried again, this time with Maria Anna of Neuburg. Charles "the sufferer", as he has

¹ An excellent sampling of this work has been translated into English by Antonio Calabria and John A. Marino, *Good Government in Spanish Naples* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990). See also Antonio Calabria, *The Cost of Empire: The Finances of the Kingdom of Naples in the Time of Spanish Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). John Marino's *Pastoral Economics in the Kingdom of Naples*, especially Pt. 3 and 5 deals with this topic.

curtain and a new opera was performed after all. The work was entitled *La donna sempre s'appiglia al peggio*, ("The Lady always chooses the worse"); the libretto was prepared by Carlo de Petris and the music was by Tommaso de Mauro. Roberto Pagano, relying on a cryptic reference in the preface to the published libretto and its dedication suggests that the young Domenico Scarlatti had a hand in its composition as well.³ Medina Coeli's Spanish etiquette with its ceremonial black, the starched ruff and his preference for the heroic tragedies of baroque opera must have seemed in nice juxtaposition with the comic theater and puppet shows of popular entertainment. Perhaps this event had something of the subversive about it; and its significance may be of more than anecdotal interest. We want to imagine carnival-like behaviors as a genuine challenge to authority; yet sometimes play may be just play. Comedic parody has a long tradition as part of Neapolitan culture. Bakhtin has suggested this can be traced back to the frescoes of Pompeii and Roman comedy.⁴ Whatever Medina Coeli knew about or thought of the puppet opera, did not adversely effect Domenico's career. A month before his sixteenth birthday the Viceroy appointed him as the organist and composer of the royal chapel in September of 1701. His annual salary was to be some 135 ducats, his father earned about four times as much—Vico's professorship of rhetoric paid 100 ducats.

Medina Coeli took up patronizing the opera again in the spring commissioning Alessandro Scarlatti to write *Laodicea e Berenice* in anticipation of Philip V's visit to Naples. In the end Philip didn't make the trip; but the opera, written for Medina Coeli's favorite singer, Maddalena Bonavia, was performed in April of 1701. Later that summer Scarlatti wrote *Il pastore di Corinto* (The Shepherd of Corinth) to celebrate the birthday of the Viceroy's wife's. Edward Dent is critical of Scarlatti's work at this time saying he "provided the viceroy with as much rubbish as the most exalted patron of the fine arts could desire to encourage."⁵ Dent seems to want to put some of the

³ Benedetto Croce, *I teatri di Napoli dal rinascimento alla fine del secolo decimottava* (Bari: Laterza, 1966), p. 126. Roberto Pagano, *Alessandro Scarlatti* (Torino: ERI, 1972), pp. 158–59. Roberto Pagano, *Scarlatti Alessandro e Domenico: due vite in una* (Milano: Mondadori, 1985), pp. 142–44.

⁴ Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination, Four essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), p. 57.

⁵ Edward J. Dent, *Alessandro Scarlatti: his life and works*, notes by Frank Walker (London: Arnold, 1960), p. 65. Donald Grout and Roberto Pagano are not as

blame on what he considers to be Medina Coeli's low taste. Why blame him? Scarlatti may well have written some less successful operas, but in any event an opera was not only the music and an evening may well have been saved by the singing or the spectacle of the scenery. Spectacle, it could be argued, was seen as the most important part. The title page of *Il Giustino* (Justin) written to celebrate Philip V's birthday in 1703 makes no mention of the librettist (Giulio Convo) or composer (Domenico Scarlatti) but identifies the work of the stage designer, Giuseppe Scarlatti. Among the more spectacular effects was a scene change in full view of the audience from the countryside to a palace and back; in another scene a mountain is struck by lightening revealing a huge cavern illuminated by torches. This production gave special prominence to these effects, and such an emphasis was not unusual. It was to Italy's economic disadvantage that these technological accomplishments and engineering marvels created no useful spinoffs in the fields of manufacture and commerce.

The Conspiracy against Medina Coeli

This wild alteration of the ruling family in Spain from the House of Hapsburg to the House of Bourbon seemed to happen with scarcely a nod in Naples; but that was only a surface appearance. Not everyone was well disposed to Spain's new Bourbon king and among the nobles there was a numerous faction in favor of the Austrian Hapsburgs. Those loyal to Philip mocked the supporters of the German emperor (Kaiser or His Caesarean Majesty) with the words shouted out by the crowd when Pilate tried Christ (John chap. 19, verse 16): *Non habemus regem nisi Caesarem* ("We shall have no king but Caesar"). For Naples' Austrian sympathizers Rome was a convenient place to confer with the representatives of Vienna; the Venetian Cardinal Grimani represented the Empire's interests in Rome. Some were so bold as to make the trip to Vienna. Around this group a conspiracy was formed which included members of the Capece, Caraffa, Ceva Grimaldi, de Sangro and Macchia families; Gaetano Gambacorta, Prince of Macchia was the leader of the revolt and it has been named after him. Rumors of a coup flew through the city in the summer of

uniformly negative, though they find the works for Medina Coeli to be of uneven interest.

1701; and, afraid of being caught, the plotters moved the date of the plot from October 5 to September 22. The idea was first to kill Medina Coeli; the best opportunity, it was thought, would be when he was returning home, late in the evening, after one of his nocturnal visits with the singer Maddalena Bonavia. To accomplish this they had suborned Medina Coeli's coachman; no, this is not a first draft for a libretto for *Rigoletto*, this was their plan. The next objective, as the plotters intended it, would be to enter the Angevine Castle; to facilitate this they had in their pay a member of the garrison. Meanwhile troops were to be gathered outside Naples who would enter the city once the citadels were taken. Having killed the Viceroy and taken the Castle, the conspirators would then consolidate their power by throwing out the supporters of the French. Their idea was to proclaim an aristocratic republic, but if that didn't fly, the plotters were willing to settle for a Hapsburg ruler. Coups don't always succeed. Already on the nineteenth Medina Coeli knew that something was afoot. Nicola Sersale, who later prepared the manuscript for the Medina Coeli academy, was a tutor to the Viceroy's pages; an acquaintance brought him the news about the threatened attack which he promptly passed forward. On the evening of the 22nd Medina Coeli refrained from going out. The Soprano was left in the lurch and there was no opportunity to assassinate the Viceroy. Still a group of plotters gathered outside the Angevine Castle waiting for their chance; they interpreted all the hubbub inside as the signal to attack. They were easily overpowered and captured.

The initial part of the plan, that of killing Medina Coeli and capturing the Angevine Castle, having gone awry, the conspirators opened up what prisons they could. The papal nunzio and the Archbishop released their prisoners on their own least they be seen as collaborating; and, ironically, some of the released prisoners headed straight to the Viceroy to support him. Rumors of the revolt flew through the city, and the inhabitants sought refuge indoors. It is difficult to imagine, but apparently on the next day the Via Toledo (or Via Roma—it is now referred to by both names) was completely empty. Empty, that is, except for a wounded cow which had somehow got loose and rampaged down the street. The noise apparently convinced people that the conspirators were out in force. Saverio Pansuti, a student of Gregorio Caloprese and a contributor to the 1697 Medina Coeli volume, harranged crowds that had gathered in the major market at the Piazza Mercato; but he proved unable to whip up any enthu-

siasm for this revolt of the nobles. The attempt to stir up the people by referring to the memories of the Revolution of Masaniello fell flat. Acting cautiously Medina Coeli examined the situation and discovered that the conspirators had occupied towers in the vicinity of the churches of Santa Chiara and San Lorenzo. On the 24th the Viceroy sent his troops into action and after some resistance captured these strongholds. The leaders of the conspiracy were taken, executed and their heads were placed on pikes.⁶ The Prince of Macchia was executed on January 22, 1702. Medina Coeli prorogued his academy and it was not revived. He chose to quarter troops in the University building; classes were moved to the convent at San Domenico Maggiore.

Despite his harsh treatment of the conspirators satires of his regime and character appeared after the Conspiracy. Early in 1702 a work pretending to be the last will and testament of Medina Coeli was circulated in the city. It was dated January 20, two days before the execution of the Prince of Macchia. One of its provisions concerned his Academy, praising its unrestrained obsequiousness and massive ignorance. Gennaro D'Andrea, the brother of Francesco, was identified as the ideal of political hypocrisy (during the conspiracy he had advised Medina Coeli to act with decisive force), and Serafino Biscardi was accused of political falsity. Nicola Caravita was identified as the author of a book entitled "The Pious Luther". There was also a parody of the Creed which begins "I believe in Leopold, the father, the almighty, Emperor of Heaven and earth, and in his son Carlo III. . . ." Carlo, it goes on, suffers but does not die under Louis and ascends to be become heir to the Spanish monarchy. Among the final prayers is a "Stabat Galli dolorosi".⁷ Frater Constanzio notes in his "Memoria" the circulation of these satires.⁸ This kind of political writing would, of course, be anonymous; and printing it was out of the question. The puppet show may have been subversive but this kind of work was definitely of that character. The allusions along with its amusing book list underline the point of how intertwined political, scholarly and artistic patronage. People whose primary

⁶ Frater Constanzius, "Memoria dell'accaduto in Neapoli dopo la morte del Cattolico RE di Spagna Carlo II." MSS BSNP XXXI B 3, 7v, 8r, 15v.

⁷ BNN MSS XIV H 43, "Composizione diverse fatte in tempo del Duca di Medina Celi", pp. 10, 19, 20, 23, 30, 44.

⁸ Frater Constanzius, "Memoria dell'accaduto in Neapoli", BSNP MSS XXXI B 3, 25v.

interests was the political scene knew and could be amused by this kind of irreverence, especially the work which promised to contain a catalogue of the Viceroy's erotic conquests.

After his prompt and vigorous suppression of the revolt Philip rewarded Medina Coeli by dismissing him in February of 1702. He was replaced by the Duke of Ascalona who had been serving as Spain's ambassador to the Papacy. Medina Coeli, a grandee, returned to Spain and became a leader of those nobles who opposed the rapidly expanding influence of the French in the Spanish governance structure. His group believed that Spanish nobles were being systematically excluded from positions of real decision making. In the end, he was arrested in April 1710, tried and found guilty of unspecified crimes; he died in prison in January of 1711.⁹

Printed and Manuscript Accounts of the Conspiracy

What had happened and what the significance of the Conspiracy was still needed to be explained. The printing press elevated or at least continued the conflict by other means. Shortly after the failed conspiracy, the losers were printing their version of events. Francesco Spinelli, duca di Castellucia, and Bartolomeo Ceva Grimaldi, duca di Telesse, published pamphlets that were circulated in Naples. Ceva Grimaldi's pamphlet was a letter apparently printed in Vienna, and it contained a German translation of his letter describing the conspiracy. His major aim in the attempted revolt, he said, was to give the Barons secure possession of their feudal property, and to return privileges to the people.¹⁰ Clearly the kind of argument and vocabulary used at the Medina Coeli by Capasso and D'Aquino was not only academic. In 1702 an anonymous publication appeared with the title *La congiura avvenuta in Napoli nel MDCCI* (The Neapolitan Conspiracy of 1701), it claimed Venice as its place of publication and that it was printed in 1702. While it is not implausible that it was printed there, it was much more likely to be a clandestine publication written by a Neapolitan and published in Naples. This ac-

⁹ Henry Kamen, *The War of Succession in Spain 1700-15* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), 86, 90, 97-98.

¹⁰ *Copia di lettera scritta da D. Bartolomeo Ceva Grimaldi, duca di Telesse ad un amico in Napoli, Vienna li 10. Decemb. 1701* (Vienna?, 1702).

count has fascinating detail and the enthusiasm of an eye witness. Two other major works can make claims to being the official story. Giambattista Vico was the author of one, entitled *De parthenopea coniuratione*, (The Neapolitan Conspiracy).¹¹ To undertake such a volume he must have received an official commission; the work was completed in a timely manner but not published until 1836 in Ferrari's edition of Vico's works. We can conclude it was not deemed a suitable account by those who commissioned it. Vico offers no hints as to what happened in his autobiography.¹²

What is clear is that Carlo Majello, a cleric with strong ties to the followers of Modern thought in Naples, published his *Coniuratio in ita et extincta Neapoli anno MDCCI* (The Neapolitan Conspiracy of 1701 from its beginning to its suppression) in 1704. The title page claims it to be published by Joannis Frik of Antwerp. It may be right to see Majello's version as an official one, perhaps replacing the unpublished version done by Vico. The advantage of such a place of publication isn't obvious. We do know that Majello's volume pleased both Louis XIV and Philip V. The work was translated into French appearing in 1706, but Majello was given no credit on the title page or in the text of that edition. It has been suggested that Majello and Vico were in actual competition for the honor of writing the "official story", though no decisive evidence has been found to prove this.

The New Bourbon Regime

Scarlatti wanted to leave Naples soon after the death of Carlo. He was persuaded to stay on in anticipation of the arrival of Philip in 1701. He remained until the royal visit in 1702, writing a new opera *Tiberio, imperatore d'Oriente* (Tiberius, Emperor of the East) which was performed in early May. Funds may indeed have been drying up, though some of Naples' most impressive art works date from the years of Philip's reign. What are we to make of evidence like the last

¹¹ Benedetto Croce, *Nuove curiosità storiche*, 137–152. Giuseppe Ricuperati, "I lumi, gli intellettuali e la corte" in *La corte nella cultura e nella storiografia: immagini e posizioni tra Otto e Novecento*, ed. Cesare Mozzarelli and Giuseppe Olmi (Bulzoni), 45–47.

¹² Benedetto Croce, *Nuove curiosità storiche* (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1922), pp. 137–152. Croce argues that Vico wrote the work between October 1701 and March 1702. Fausto Nicolini, *Vico storico* ed. F. Tessitore (Naples: Morano, 1967), pp. 424–8, seems to favor 1703.

scene of *Lesbina e Adolfo*, the intermezzo for Scarlatti's 1700 opera *Odoardo*, the libretto by Apostolo Zeno? In the last scene the character Adolfo, a wealthy commoner, who is at last making successful love to Lesbina is beset by an obnoxious gang of beggars. These supposed cripples harrass him for money but when he leaves the stage they throw down their crutches and have a merry dance. Adolfo returns, enraged to see them dancing but admits that he too is a rogue and a dodger like them. So he marries Lesbina. Was this social commentary, a reaction to a stalled economy, or a nod to Naples' notoriously inventive beggars and con artists?¹³ Adolfo's mysterious remark at the beginning of Scene 4 that he is looking for his king, may also allude to the uncertain political situation of that year.

The young king Philip V, 19 years old, arrived in Naples on Easter Monday and stayed until June 2. Philip brought in his train the Neapolitan painters Luca Giordano, who for the past ten years had been working in Spain, and Andrea Belvedere, who specialized in paintings of fruit and flowers. Before heading to Spain in 1694 Belvedere had been friends with Caravita and Valletta; coming back to Naples he gave up painting and worked in the theater.¹⁴ Solimena was commissioned to paint Philip's portrait. Paolo de Matteis was recruited by the Count of Estrées, who was travelling with Philip, to come to Paris where he stayed until 1705. He had recently done frescoes for pharmacies for San Luigi, San Caterina a Formiello and the Certosa di San Martino; an odd kind of specialization, but Paolo de Matteis had had an unusual background. De Matteis' father had insisted that besides studying painting his son took lessons from Naples' leading scientific minds; he studied with major representatives of the Investiganti movement, Tommaso Cornelio, Leonardo di Capoa, and two other doctors, Luca Tozzi and Tommaso Donzelli, a major participant in the Medina Coeli Academy.¹⁵ (In 1696 Tommaso Donzelli edited and brought up to date his father Giuseppe's *Teatro farmaceutico dogmatico e spagirico*; Venice is listed as the place of publication, but the title page shows an image of Naples.)

The major kudos was awarded to Luca Giordano who, in his late

¹³ Ruggiero Romano, *Napoli dal Viceregno al Regno: storia economica* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976), pp. 60–62.

¹⁴ Carla Guglielmini Faldi and Ada Zapperi, "Belvedere, Andrea", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 8, 84–86.

¹⁵ Bernardo de Dominici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletani*, v. 3, 518–523.

sixties, was asked to paint the ceiling of the Capella del Tesoro in the Certosa of San Martino. The Certosa, by this time, was one of Naples most distinctive buildings. The Carthusian monks were noted for their learning and their development of advanced agricultural techniques. The grape arbor and the garden overlooking the Bay of Naples as well as the gardens in the Cloister remind the visitor of that aspect of the Monastery's mission. The architecture of the entire complex was the work of Cosimo Fanzago of the early seventeenth century; the selection for the patterned marble for the interior was his work as well. The colors and design of the enlaid marble transform the older Gothic style into a Neapolitan baroque church. This virtuosity in stone is matched by the tarsia wood panelling and stalls in the choir and the cabinets of the sacristy. Several of Ribera's best works are in the Church as well as those of Massimo Stanzone. It isn't certain whether credit for the employment of Giordano should be given to the Prior Xaviero Terracciano, who directed the monastery from 1697-1702, or to his successor Giovanni Nardelli, who was in charge from 1702-1715. On April 7, 1703 Giordano signed a contract to do a number of works, receiving an advance of 500 ducats out of a total payment of 2000 ducats. He seems to have finished in the fall of that year, but the final receipt was signed in April 1704.

Giordano's "Judith" fresco has been regarded as the end of a century of art which began when Caravaggio came to Naples in 1607. Giordano was born in Naples in 1634; his father was a workmanlike artist, who at first seemed to have intended his son for a different career. His given name was Agostino (Augustine), but that was changed to Luca (Luke), the patron saint of artists. His nickname was "Luca fa presto" (Luca works fast) presumably because of the speed with which he worked. Some, perhaps to explain his emphasis on color as well as his speed, claimed he worked out his fresco subjects while painting them; others said, in order to get the sense of spontaneity he wanted, he took models with him up on the scaffolding, so as to paint from them directly. The most outrageous origin of the nickname comes from stories about his avaricious father who fed Luca with his own hands so he would be free to paint while he ate; all the while his father called out "Faster, Luca". The greatest influence on his art was that of Ribera, though it is not known if he was trained directly by him. In the early 1650s Giordano studied in Rome and in Venice, and while he would regularly return

to Naples his career took him to several lengthy stays in major cities in northern Italy and ten years in Madrid.

Giordano's Certoso fresco the "Trionfo di Giudetta" (Triumph of Judith) has a brightness in its center coming from the light surrounding God the Father, who appears to be floating on clouds directly above Judith who holds the severed head of Holofernes. A sight line can be drawn from the severed head straight to the tent where the trunk of the body has just been discovered. On one side of the vault Judith displays the head terrifying the Assyrian troops; on the opposite side is the Assyrian camp with Holofernes' tent. The other two sides are battle scenes which connect the two scenes together. At the four corners of the vault are four heroic women: Jael in the act of driving a spike in Sisera's head; Deborah, the Judge and Prophet; Pharoah's daughter, who just pulled Moses from the bullrushes; and perhaps Jephtha's daughter carrying wood.¹⁶ In these sections of the vault Giordano's putti are quite active and seem to be up to some undetermined mischief. One appears to be stealing a book from Deborah; another is pouring an amphora of water, perhaps to wash away Sisera's blood. De Dominici saw the work as being so perfect of its kind that speech could not describe it. Solimena admired the painting because of its sense of unity, and said that it seemed to be done with a single brushstroke, and he praised its *la furia, il fuoco, e'l sapere* (fury, fire and wisdom).¹⁷ This work shares the attribute of furor, *furore*, which De Domenici characterized Solimena's frescos in San Paolo Maggiore.¹⁸

Is there a relationship between the choice of Judith and the four Old Testament heroines as a subject and Bulifon's series of books on women poets? Related to this may be Alessandro Scarlatti's oratorio *La Giuditta* first performed in Naples in 1695, and then in Rome, Florence and Vienna; the libretto by the Cardinal Benedetto Pamphili was published in Naples by Parrino and Muzio. In regards to relations between Scarlatti and Giordano it is relevant to mention the homage to Giordano that appears in Scarlatti's Christmas Cantata of 1705 which was performed in Rome. The libretto was written by

¹⁶ Judith Colton, "Luca Giordano" in *A Taste for Angels: Neapolitan Painting in North America: 1650-1750* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 160.

¹⁷ Domenico de Domenici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori, ed architetti napoletani*, v. 3, 430.

¹⁸ Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a historiography of others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), chap. 6, 189-228 discusses the theme of *furore* in the period 1500-1650.

Silvio Stampiglia who had spent many years in Naples. Stampiglia, punning on Giordano's name wrote as the first line of the prophet Isaiah's aria "*Bella gloria avrà il Giordano*" (The Jordan (Giordano) will have great glory). And the first line of the second section makes clear that the pun is not accidental: "*e per opra di sua mano*" (and by the work of his hand). Although he was writing for a Roman audience, here and in other arias of this work Scarlatti used distinctively Neapolitan rhythms and style. Back to Judith, prior to this (in Spain and in 1687 for Naples' Santissima Annunziata Church) Giordano had painted a series of exemplary Old Testament women.¹⁹ Such subjects in themselves were not unusual, but subtle variations on traditional themes should be noted.²⁰ Giordano does not show Judith in the more traditional poses of either the cutting off the head or of her silently contemplating the deed. Instead, he steps outside of the textual story and represents Judith in an heroic pose displaying the severed head to the Assyrian army, and thus frightening them into a retreat.

Other work was done for the Certosa; Solimena was responsible for a new design of the main altar. Giacomo Colombo carved the actual altar; he was a specialist in both wood and marble. Lorenzo Vaccaro did some work on the marble floor for the Cappella of San Giovanni Battista (St. John the Baptist Chapel); he was also commissioned to do four statues of Virtues. Lorenzo was scarcely fifty when he died in 1706 leaving the completion of these statues to his son Domenico Antonio Vaccaro. Vaccaro became one of Naples' leading architects in the early eighteenth century and his sculptures are seen as pointing to the new Rococo style. The four statues were paid for at the rate of 50 ducats a piece. As an added touch of realism *Penitence* carries a real, not sculpted scourge. In 1708 he began the Cappella del Rosario, a work in white stucco, a number of fine putti emerge from the walls. In 1718–19 he did the Cappella di San Giuseppe (St. Joseph's Chapel) in gilded stucco, a material which adds to the illusion of the sly innocent appearance of the putti. But it was in the Cappella di San Gennaro (St. Gennaro Chapel) with

¹⁹ Judith Colton, "Luca Giordano", in *A Taste for Angels*, 147–149; Bernardo De Domenici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori, ed architetti napoletani*, v. 3, 409.

²⁰ Domenico de Domenici, *Vite de' Pittori, scultori, ed architetti napoletani* v. 3, 37, tells us that Bernardo Cavallino, a Neapolitan painter of the first half of the seventeenth century, did four paintings, a Judith, Jael, Deborah and a Sampson, that went to Spain with Pietro Antonio d'Aragona.

the sculpted marble reliefs of the four Evangelists and other figures that make clear his skill as a decorative artist.²¹ Domenico Vaccaro was the designer for the famous frontispiece of Vico's *Scienza nuova*. Besides the Certosa other significant works were undertaken in Naples. In 1706 the *Teatro di San Giovanni dei Fiorentini* converted itself from playing Spanish comedy to opera. It was in direct competition with the San Bartolomeo which Medina Coeli had redesigned. Later, in 1709, under new ownership, the *Florentini* began staging comic opera performed and written in the Neapolitan dialect.

Philip and the Investiture

Although Philip had been able to force his claim to the Spanish inheritance immediately after the death of Carlo II he needed the aid of intellectuals and scholars to bolster his legal claim and to encourage popular support. While a trip to the Americas or the Philippines was out of the question, a visit to his Italian territories made good political sense. Royal visits meant grand celebrations and parades; and, in the baroque ideology, those cheering crowds on the streets represented popular consent for a new ruler. And, from his visits he could expect to extract a supplementary donative or "free gift" from the assemblies of the local nobility. Along with a cheering crowd it was also believed that a triumphal entrance and royal visit required that lawyers prepare legal briefs on the sovereign's behalf, and that poems and inscriptions be composed by local intellectuals. Even before Philip's visit to Naples, Basilio Giannelli had written an *Orazione per l'elezione del glorioso Filippo Quinto* (A Speech on the selection of the Glorious Philip V), published by Valiero in 1701. For the task of a legal defense of his title Philip did not use the more radical lawyers like Nicolò Caravita or Nicola Capasso; instead he turned to Amato Danio and Serafino Biscardi. In 1703, Philip's claims were also supported by Vincenzo Salvi; besides this publication I have been unable to learn anything else of his career. This was followed in 1704 by a defense by another conservative jurist Giovanni Antonio Castagnola; Castagnola was to later serve the Austrian viceregency

²¹ Anthony Blunt, *Neapolitan baroque & rococo architecture* (London: Zwemmer, Ltd., 1975), pp. 110-111.

and was associated with Vico's circle in the 1720s and wrote poetry for the same patrons.²²

In 1705 Bulifon published a volume commemorating a celebration held the past December for Philip's birthday. Vico was a participant and wrote the approval letter, his first in this line of work. Aulisio, Doria, Giannelli, Cristofaro and the painter Francesco Solimena were all involved in this publication. In 1706 Parrino published another collection of verse praising Philip. Philip's desire to symbolize his political legitimacy was represented by his commission in 1702 of Lorenzo Vaccaro to cast in bronze a larger than life equestrian statue. Matteo Egizio was hired to write the inscription for the statue; this kind of work also contained its own rituals of conflict. The propriety and grammar of Egizio's phrasing was challenged and in 1706 he published a defense of his inscription.²³ The statue was erected in Piazza between the Churches of Gesù Nuovo and Santa Chiara, but it was destroyed during the jubilation and rioting that followed the Hapsburg's capture of the city in 1707.

New Books and Make-Believe Academies

Given the needs and pressures facing Philip it was not surprising that he promoted books that would support his cause. What is more surprising, perhaps, was despite the pressures of impending war Naples continued to publish a number of interesting licensed and unlicensed books in a variety of fields. Without the Medina Coeli Neapolitans saw to the distribution of their poetry. In 1701–1702 Giovan Lorenzo Acampora published two volumes, *Raccolta di rime di poeti napoletani non più ancora stampati* (A Collection of Poems by Neapolitan Poets never before in print). This was printed by Domenico Parrino; the volume included poems by men and women, most of whom had been involved in the poetry dedicated to Medina Coeli. Perhaps the most important addition to this group was Stefano di Stefano who

²² Antonio Vitolo, "Castagnola, Giovanni Antonio" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 21, 540–542.

²³ Matteo Egizio, *Lettera in difesa dall'iscrizione da lui composta per la statua equestre inalzata in Napoli al glorioso monarca Filippo V diretta a D. Federigo Pappacoda* (Napoli: Mosca, 1706). The "duel" with Pappacoda was an indication of Egizio's move into the mainstream of Neapolitan intellectuals; this kind of interchange was a conflict among friends not a squabble of rivals.

was to become the great prose writer of the administration of Naples' real Arcadia, the eastern portion of the kingdom which contained numerous flocks of sheep.²⁴

Acampora's collection of new poets was quickly overshadowed by the work of Giacinto Gimma, a remarkable intellectual impresario and self-promoter.²⁵ Gimma, born in Bari in 1668, graduated from the University of Naples in 1696, and then returned to Bari, on the Kingdom's southeast coast, where he seems to have spent most of his life.²⁶ He was a personal friend of Elia Astorini, whose combination of religious commitment and scientific materialism was a curious but not uncommon juxtaposition of values. Gimma appears to have been extremely well-connected, or if not, he was full of audacity and quite willing to use names and reputations for his own ends. It is difficult to state with accuracy how Gimma proceeded and what were his goals. I surmise that on his return to Bari, Gimma decided to recreate something of the intellectual community he had known in Naples and thus established his own imaginary academy, imaginary in the sense that it never met. He called his group *L'Accademia degli Spensierati di Rossano* (the Academy of the Scatterbrained of Rossano); Rossano is in Calabria in the vicinity of the ancient town of the Sybarites. Gimma lists some 150 names among the membership; the list consists mostly of men but a small number of women were included. Francesco Solimena was among the group, as was Andrea Perrucci who had written librettos and theoretical works on opera, the most important was his *Dell'arte rappresentativa premeditata ed all'improvviso* (1699) (Concerning Scripted and Improvisational Forms of the Theatrical Arts). Many of the members were from southern Italy, but there were a number from Rome, Florence, Turin and Venice. Besides Italians, some members were Germans.²⁷

The publication history of these works of his Academy is rather confused. Gaetano Tremiglozzi was apparently the author of *Nuova staffetta da Parnaso circa gli affari della medicina . . . dirizzata all'illustrissima*

²⁴ John Marino, "The State and the Shepherds", *Journal of Modern History*, v. 58, p. 132.

²⁵ Gimma was involved with a number of interesting projects among them the printing of Coronelli's *Biblioteca*; a record of the expenses in printing this book can be found in BMV Misc 2168.

²⁶ His life is described by Domenico Maurodinoia in the *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici* (Venezia: Zane, 1738), vol. 17, art. xiv.

²⁷ Alfredo Gradilone, *Storia di Rossano*, 2nd edition (Cosenza: MIT, 1967), 501-525.

Acaadematica degli Spensierati di Rossano (New Dispatch from Parnassus concerning medical matters . . . for the most illustrious Academy of the Scatterbrained of Rossano). No publisher is given, the place is said to be Frankfurt and the date 1700. The title alludes to the work of Traiano Boccalini's *Ragguagli di Parnaso*, from the early seventeenth century. Frankfurt, it would seem, was a false location. In the work itself the claim was made that this volume had circulated in manuscript. When, lo and behold, a published edition appeared in Frankfurt, Gimma applied for permission to bring the work into the Kingdom of Naples. While a possible scenario, it is easier to believe the work was printed clandestinely. Besides providing a list of members the purpose of the publication was to clarify the Academy's position in the ongoing quarrel between doctors who were Galenists, and those more interested in chemical approaches to medicine, the spyrogists. Included in this volume are some spoofs: a Peripetetic's recantation and an epitaph to Prime Matter by Elia Astorini—this indicates the modern philosophic sentiments of the publication. The second work lists Giacinto Gimma as the author. The work is entitled *Elogi accademici della Società degli Spensierati di Rossano* (Learned praise for the Society of the Scatterbrained of Rossano). Its two volumes were published by Carlo Troise in Naples in 1703. These include the laws and regulations of this Academy. In this regard it is interesting to note that volume one was dedicated to the *eletti* (Elect) of Naples, who constitute the city's local government, its local nobility; the second was dedicated to Philip V. Why make the sovereign number two? Could it be a way of placing local assemblies of nobles higher than a sovereign? That would seem unbelievably risky and perhaps the order of dedications has no significance.

While the Rossano Academy was only an imagined academy, on August 17, 1703 the Neapolitan Arcadian society was founded by Biagio Majoli d'Avitabile.²⁸ The significance of this organization was that it was essentially independent of political changes or the retirement of a viceroy. The Neapolitan Arcadia had its own constitution and governance structure; it is interesting to compare these groups

²⁸ Amedeo Quondam, "L'istituzione Arcadia sociologia e ideologia di un'accademia", *Quaderni storici*, (1973), 23, 389-438; he argues that the Arcadians were committed to the idea that culture was politically neutral and that its pastoral fictions linked it to the culture of Catholicism. Pompeo Giannantonio, *L'Arcadia napoletana* (Napoli: Liguori, 1962), 299-301, and 207-208, note 176.

to the near contemporary organizations of the lodges of the Freemasons.²⁹ An obvious and significant difference was the contrast of their make believe roles as herders of livestock and with those who were designers and builders. The emphasis on both was the civic life; and the Arcadias, with their pastoralism, represented a potentially more radical critique than the more urban masons. In 1705 the Arcadians of Naples published a volume of poetry to celebrate Annibale Albani's reception of his Ph.D.; Albani was a nephew of Pope Clement XI. The Neapolitan Arcadia contained many members of the Academy of Medina Coeli and participants in his memorial volume, and it included a small number of women. The Arcadia included illustrious foreigners such as poet-librettist Apostolo Zeno and Clement XI himself, as well as the late Leonardo di Capoa and Francesco D'Andrea. The kingdom's most prestigious and powerful lawyers were Arcadians: Gaetano Argento, Niccolo Caravita and Gennaro D'Andrea. Giacinto Gimma was also a member; and Domenico Aulisio, learned in law and Biblical criticism, for the first time, joined an organization of this sort. Interestingly neither Vico, Matteo Egizio or Costantino Grimaldi were nominated at this time. Was this politically motivated? Vico's absence is perhaps the most surprising. Did this withholding of an honor indicate displeasure with his account of the Macchia conspiracy? In 1706, the Neapolitan Arcadia published another volume, this one was in praise of Philip V and was dedicated to Louis XIV.

Another professional organization was proposed for Italian scholars about this time; it was the brainchild of Ludovico Muratori, the great librarian and historian from Modena. He drafted a list of leaders for what he called a *Repubblica letteraria* (Republic of Letters). In the first roster only two Neapolitans were included: Gregorio Caloprese and Nicolò Partennio Giannettasio. Giannettasio had remained Naples' most widely published poet; Caloprese had published some criticism on Italian poetry. Later, other Neapolitans were added: Giacinto Cristofaro, Biagio Garofalo, Gian Vincenzo Gravina, Costantino Grimaldi and Giuseppe Valletta. Muratori's list included no women; it indicated those Neapolitans who had had success in the establishing a reputation in letters beyond the boundaries of Naples.

Besides the publications of these new academies, Neapolitans kept up a lively trade in the publication and reading of clandestine books.

²⁹ Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 6-7, 14-22.

One was clearly the product of Valletta's library. In 1701, Gaetano Lombardo published an Italian translation of Antoine Dilly's work on animal consciousness.³⁰ Dilly, a French priest, had issued this work in the year of his death in 1676; it was part of an ongoing controversy concerning animal consciousness and the question of whether animals had souls. For example, Thomas Willis had published on this topic in 1672 as had Ignace-Gaston Pardies, a Jesuit; Pardies' work had been translated into Italian and published in Venice in 1694. Lombardo, an Arcadian and a member of the Rossano Academy, entitled his translation *Trattato dell'anima e del conoscimento de' bruti animali secondo i principi di Renato delle Cartes* (Treatise concerning the soul and consciousness of dumb animals according to Descartes' Principles).³¹ Lombardo provided lengthy annotations to the text. In one passage he refers to a manuscript of Pereira he consulted at Valletta's library. Later he refers to Valletta's not yet printed *Lettera* and quotes two citations from it. His work contained such a glowing tribute to Valletta that his text was cited as part of the eulogy for Valletta published in the 1714 *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*. In another passage he discussed the views of Naples' foremost scientist, Luc'-Antonio Porzio. The titlepage asserted the work was printed in Cologne, and Lombardo apologizes for all the printing errors which he claims were due to this long distance publishing venture. The errors, in all likelihood, were committed close to home, done by a printer working illegally and in haste.

While we don't know the precise reasons that sent Lombardo to pursue an illicit publication, the reasons are manifest in the 1703 edition of Boccaccio's *Il Decamerone*. The work had been on the Index since the sixteenth century. This was one of the publications associated with Ciccarelli, who arranged for the clandestine Leonardo di Capoa editions discussed earlier. In this case the false place of publication of "Amsterdam" was given. Another example of an

³⁰ *Lettere dal Regno*, p. 734. In a letter of October 18, 1701, Lombardo speaks of his book. It is the only publication I have been able to trace to him. His work appeared at the same time as Grimaldi's first attack on De Benedetti, and perhaps in the midst of the Macchia conspiracy. On Dilly see Henri Gouhier, *Cartésianisme et Augustinisme au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1978), 149-53.

³¹ Dilly's original title was *De l'âme des bestes, où après avoir démontré la spiritualité de l'âme de l'homme, l'on explique par la seule machine les actions les plus surprenantes des animaux suivant les principes de Descartes* (On the soul of beasts, where, after having demonstrated the spirituality of the human soul, the most amazing activities of animals are explained by mechanics according to the principles of Descartes).

interest in dangerous books was that of Biagio Aldimari who wrote Magliabecchi in December of 1706 asking for some books on genealogical topics. But he also asked for what he called *De preadamitis* (Concerning the Pre-Adamites), along with the refutations of it, he added for good measure. This request for the heretical work of Isaac de la Peyrere is a bit surprising—I presume Aldimari knew that Valletta had a copy in his library and that he was seeking one for himself. There is no indication from anything he wrote later that suggests his reaction to these ideas, nor is it even known if he received the books he sought.

Neapolitans took up even more dangerous approaches to their tradition. In 1707 there appeared a book supposedly by a priest from Chiusano called *Discorsi critici sull'istoria della vita di S. Amato Prete, e primo vescovo di Nusco con una lettera, la quale racchiude una dissertazione ove si dà accurate giudizio del sacco di S. Francesco* (Critical discourse on the life of St. Amato, the Priest and first Bishop of Nusco with a letter which contains an essay giving an accurate judgement on the pouch of St. Francis). The supposed place of publication was Genoa and the printer Giovanni Battista Celle. But this was not as it seemed. While Saint Amato was real, the author of the text was Giacomo Grazini a member of Valletta's circle. Francesco Noia, I note, seems to have been a real person as well. At least in 1703, a Francesco Noia published in Milan an oration and an account of the funeral of Carlo Carafa.³² Nevertheless there seemed to be no dispute about the authorship. A 1710 edition of the *Giornale de'letterati d'Italia* baldly observed that Grazini was actually the author.³³

Grazini's analysis of St. Amato can be seen as a continuation of the critical spirit of the *Medina Coeli*, or more properly of the essays of Costantino Grimaldi. What Grazini does is to distinguish fact and legend in the accounts left concerning St. Amato from the early thirteenth century. The scientific knowledge of the seventeenth century and the attitude towards miracles developed by Spinoza and

³² Francesco Noia, *Relazione della morte e funerali . . . D. Carlo Carafa* (Milano: Giovanni Battista Bidellio, 1703). Noia dedicates his oration to Caterina Spinelli and signs Chiusano as his location.

³³ *Giornale de'letterati*, 1710, vol. 2, art. 17, 481–483. Grimaldi mentions Grazini as the author in the manuscript of his “Fifth Letter” on Benedetti; BNN MSS XIII D 115, # 742. Vittor Ivo Comparato, “Ragione e fede nelle *Discussioni storiche*”, in *Saggi e ricerche sul Settecento* (Napoli: Istituto Italiano per gli studi storici, 1968), pp. 92–93. Comparato called attention to Grimaldi's identification of Grazini as the real Noia.

the *Acta Sanctorum*, offered him a method by which he could correct his sources. He used textual principles developed by the Bollandists and by Mabillon and the Maurists to evaluate the legends about Amato. Among his principles was that unless there were compelling reasons to the contrary, he would not accept as evidence traditions only supported by later documents. His preference was to admit that his evidence was confused rather than embrace a false piety that embellished facts to create a compelling, edifying narrative. Such rules let him digress and explain how the theological studies of the scholastics were dangerous to true Christian belief.

Grazini claimed that establishing the historical truth was what mattered to him. And, while he would question the miracles attributed to Amato, his interest was to defend Amato's true saintliness. Thus, for example, he doubted the story that Amato's mother had a revelation that she was to bear a saint; there was no mention of it in the earliest documents. He doubted that Amato lived in perfect health for many years despite a wound or hole in his head that would not heal. The grounds for this, besides some late documentary evidence was that the skull in the reliquary had a hole in it. Grazini wasn't certain of the cause of the hole, though he expected it was some kind of post-mortem accident. But what was more decisive for him than the lack of its mention in old documents was the fact that the natural operations of healing would have closed the wound. The healing may have been miraculous, but God, in doing it would have followed his own natural laws. The body was a *corporeal macchina* (bodily mechanism) which God had created to act in certain regular ways; it would be absurd to imagine God as altering the order he had created.³⁴

In these examples Grazini rigorously applied the principles of the separation of disciplines. The theologian's desire to create miracles to liven up a story about virtue and right action cannot interfere with the straightforward scientific analysis of matters of fact. People cannot live with a hole in their skull and it was an error to try to explain the hole when a perfectly natural explanation was ready to hand: the skull was unintentionally damaged. As Grazini saw it, the original story of Amato was one of a pious and upright man who lived the life of the Gospel. What else does one need in order to be a saint? The truth of his life's story was much more strongly supported

³⁴ Giacomo Grazini [Francesco Noia], *Discorsi critici*, pp. 161, 164-5.

by his virtue than with fabricated miracles. This repeated Spinoza's argument that the truth of Scripture can be known by the morality it teaches. Appended to the work on Amato was a piece on a supposedly miraculous sack of St. Francis. This, perhaps, stirred up even more trouble than the attack on Amato; Francesco Perez, in 1710 wrote a defense of the sack; this was followed by another in 1714. Both were printed in Benevento. And, it should not raise too many eyebrows to learn, in 1711 Grazini's work was added to the Index. In 1733 another answer appeared against Grazini, this time an *Apoloogia* by Paolino Sandulli, published in Naples by Mosca.³⁵ It is perhaps surprising to learn that in 1725 Grazini was the first holder of a chair in ecclesiastical history at the University in Naples.

It is fitting to conclude this section with the Neapolitan publication in 1710 of the *Dialogo intorno ai due massimi sistemi* (A Dialogue Concerning the two Chief World Systems) of Galileo. The thoughts and ideas of Galileo on astronomy were well known in Naples, though his books and writings would not be readily available if one wanted a personal copy. In 1663 Tommaso Cornelio published a dialogue which records conversations in the Elysium Fields among renowned scientists; Galileo discussed his geometrical method and his telescope. Another example of the presence of the *Dialogo* in Naples can be found in an unacknowledged reference in Vico's third inaugural lecture of 1701. Vico adapted a speech by Sagredo concerning the origin of the nerves and a praise of the experimental method which had begun the conversation of the second day of the *Dialogo*. Leonardo di Capoa had previously incorporated the same passage into the second section of his *Parere* which defended the liberty of scholars to study and to philosophize about nature. And later, probably in the early 1730s, in the second part of his *Il triregno*, Giannone made reference to this same passage.³⁶ What is unclear is whether Vico and Giannone were making silent homage to Galileo or to Di Capoa.

The 1710 Neapolitan edition was the first Italian edition since the condemnation of the original volume. And this printing included the first edition of the "Letter to the Grandduchess". In that work Galileo stated clearly the principle of the non-interference of theology into

³⁵ A summary of subsequent views can be found in Giuseppe Passaro, *Un testamento ed una compravendita: Analisi paleografica comparata* (Napoli: Tipografia Napoletana, 1973).

³⁶ Leonardo di Capoa, *Parere* (Napoli: Raillard, 1695), p. 34. Pietro Giannone, *Il Triregno* (Bari: Laterza, 1940), 2, 283.

other fields of research. He argued that the Bible ought not be used to support or refute a scientific theory; in the same way, while science may be able to explain a miracle in the Bible, such an explanation had nothing to do with faith. Although published in Naples, the false place of publication of "Firenze" was given on the title page. This work, like Lombardo's translation, was dedicated to Carlo Carafa-Pacecco, duca di Maddaloni.³⁷ In 1710 the *Giornale de'Letterati* published a brief review calling attention to the edition, while noting at the same time the book had been rightly condemned.³⁸ In itself this doesn't sound very brave, but if we consider that just 20 years before another Italian journal had simply printed Tycho's system of the world without indicating its controversial character, we may grant the new *Giornale* operated with greater liberty.

³⁷ Gustavo Costa, "La cerchia dei Duchi di Laurenzano", *Bolletino del centro di studi vichiani*, 10, 40-41. Vincenzo Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione: Mondo Newtoniano e cultura italiana nel primo settecento* (Napoli: Jovene, 1982), 136-145; Vincenzo Ferrone, "Riflession sulla cultura illuministica napoletana e l'eredità di Galilei" in *Galileo e Napoli*, ed. F. Lomomaco and M. Torrini (Napoli: Guida, 1987), 430-432.

³⁸ *Giornale de'Letterati*, (1710), 4, 434.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE AUSTRIAN INVASION OF NAPLES OF 1707

Naples, in 1707, became for a brief period a battleground in the War of the Spanish Succession. In consequence, the Bourbons lost Naples to the Austrian Hapsburgs. This kind of transition would require new legal briefs, official celebrations, histories, memorial inscriptions: the kinds of things early modern intellectuals were eager to provide their rulers. The Allies' grand strategy in their war against France and Spain during 1707 was to capitalize on their victories of the preceeding year and gain control of the western Mediterranean. The English general Marlborough had beaten the French at Ramillies in May of 1706 and taken Brabant and most of Flanders, his task in 1707 was to hold the attention of the main French army to Flanders. Marlborough's colleague Prince Eugene of Savoy who had relieved Turin in September, 1706, and driven the French out of northern Italy was to lead the major thrust into southern France. Eugene's aim was to capture Toulon, France's major naval base in the Mediterranean. And the Allies hoped that the successes in Spain of 1706 might be repeated. Madrid had fallen to an Allied Army, though they were only able to hold the city for several months before making a strategic retreat. But the plan for 1707 failed. Eugene's army and a British fleet with Dutch support proved insufficient to capture Toulon; at Almansa in Spain on April 25, the Allied army was decisively defeated by the Franco-Spanish forces.¹ The Allies' only major success of the year was the Austrian capture of Naples, southern Italy and Sicily. Was this the time to seize the Kingdom of Naples? Perhaps, if Eugene had had the entire Austrian force concentrated in the north the operation against Toulon might have succeeded. But Naples was too attractive a prize to let go, and in that spring Allied optimism had been high. Naples was inadequately defended

¹ The battle had the complexities and antitheses Churchill loved to relate: "History has noted the oddity that in this battle the English commanded by the Frenchman, Galway (Ruvigny), were beaten by the French commanded by the Englishman, Berwick." Winston Churchill, *Marlborough: His Life & Times* (London: Sphere Books, 1967), vol. 3, 219.

and the territory seemed to be waiting for an invader bold enough to take it. No one imagined, since the French were on the run, that 8000 Austrian troops could make a decisive difference.

The invasion of Naples had been preceded by a long and drawn out diplomatic exchange in which the first skirmishing had taken place in Rome. From the beginning of the war, both the Spanish and Austrians sought to obtain the Investiture of Naples from the Pope. Rumors and accusations were exchanged. Each side spread stories that their rival ambassador had been caught in the middle of the night trying to smuggle into the Papal Palace the richly caparisoned palfry that should be given to the Pope as part of the investiture ceremony. Whether bewhigged diplomats were really running about in pursuit of a skittish horse is not certain. More serious and certain was the fighting in northern Italy between Austria and France which spilled across the borders of the Papal States. Papal representatives proved unable to graciously drive out the rival armies and to maintain the appearance of neutrality. After an incident in 1705 where a Papal general turned a blind eye to the French, the Austrians claimed themselves victims of Papal duplicity. Clement's apologies and attempts at restitution were of no avail, but the death of the Emperor Leopold I in 1705 seemed to offer a chance to make amends with his successor Joseph I.

Joseph, however, proved to be an even tougher adversary. To alarm the Papacy Joseph removed his ambassador from Rome, and dismissed the Papal nuncio from Vienna. No, Rome shouldn't panic, he said, for he had no interest in breaking relations, he was just suspending them until some other matters got straightened out. The series of Allied victories in 1706 changed the Pope's position in drastic fashion. The defeat of the French in Northern Italy meant that the Pope had only his own few troops to hold the Austrians back. In the spring of 1707, Prince Eugene invaded southern France, and Field Marshall Daun and Martinitz prepared to conquer Naples. To accomplish this, safe passage across Papal territory was demanded; despite Spanish and French protests Clement yielded. To his dismay the Austrians chose not to take the shortest route, instead they marched close to Rome; the only purpose of this must have been to further intimidate or humiliate the Papacy. The invasion of Naples proved an easy success with no major engagements except for two siege operations which lasted a couple of months; the fortress of Gaeta offered the longest resistance, surrendering on October 23. That winter Joseph

ordered all ecclesiastical revenues of his new Italian territories that customarily were sent to Rome be impounded. The Pope then threatened excommunication, but Prince Eugene was unimpressed; such blows he could easily take in his stride. In May of 1708 the Emperor in conjunction with the Este court of Modena seized the port of Comacchio on the Adriatic coast. The Pope, after these threats and other hostile actions elsewhere, declared war on the Hapsburgs in October. His troops were driven back. The Emperor's allies, England and Holland were not amused, for they saw this war with the Pope as a distraction from the real enemies: France and Spain. They put pressure on Joseph to get back to his proper business; peace was made with Rome in early 1709. Joseph could claim that he had obtained Papal recognition for his brother as king of Spain and a grant permitting the temporary occupation of Comacchio. If one measures success by diplomatic concessions, Clement hadn't suffered much, but he had lost significantly in reputation as a moderator between Catholic powers. Philip, needless to say, protested this treaty. Now it was his turn to sever ties with Rome and withhold revenues that had been sent to Rome.

The Neapolitan Transition from Bourbon to Hapsburg

Having described how Austria captured Spain's Italian lands, I will detail this from the perspective of Naples. Austrian sympathizers in Naples had not disappeared with the brutal suppression of the Macchia Conspiracy. Rumors had circulated before the failed revolt that even Medina Coeli was not pleased with the French twist in Spain and that he intended to set himself up as the independent ruler of Naples. At this distance the evidence is insufficient to distinguish between the envious fantasies subjects project on their bureaucrats, and the low cunning that upper level administrators regularly practice. Whatever his private hopes Medina Coeli made no move to proclaim the independence of Naples; furthermore, the conspiracy of the Macchia made clear there was no real popular support for a revolt led by the nobles, or a republic founded by the aristocracy. Still, there was the question would the people themselves take to the streets as they had in the revolt of Masaniello in the middle of the seventeenth century? Northern Europe, it seems, could readily imagine Naples as being in a pre-revolutionary condition. In Hamburg in 1706 a new opera called

Masaniello Furioso (Masaniello Enraged) was produced. The libretto was by Barthold Feind, whose work as a political operative and satirist, suggests his interest in this subject was not simply literary. The music was by Reinhard Keiser, director of the Hamburg opera, who already had a reputation for composing pastorals in the Italian style and was a rival of the young Handel.² Burney ranked him the equal of Haydn in terms of imagination and musical inventiveness. The opera's subject, as the title suggests, was the radical phase of Masaniello's revolt against the Spanish; such topicality was as unusual in the opera of 1706 as John Adams' *Nixon in China* or *Klinghoffer* is in ours.

But a significant number of Neapolitan scholars and certain groups of nobles were quite willing to work with the Franco-Spanish regime. And there were some like the French printer Antonio Bulifon and his son Niccolò who were extremely enthusiastic about the change. Bulifon had perhaps the most to be grateful for from this new regime of all those associated with intellectual production in Naples. The Bulifons regularly received royal patronage, and Antonio was given the prestigious job of travelling in the entourage of Philip on his Italian trip of 1702 for the purpose of writing up an account of it. He had the role of a journalist in the pay of the state. He published this *Giornale del viaggio d'Italia* (Journal of the voyage through Italy) in 1703 and it consists of more than 400 pages detailing Philip's progress through Italy. Philip used the imagery of the sun which his grandfather, Louis XIV, had monopolized, as one of the themes of his public processions. In Naples, he received official local recognition when the blood of the city's major patron saint, San Gennaro (St. Januarius) liquified after Philip's visit to the Saint's chapel.

Niccolò Bulifon was so open about his feelings that in 1705 he was mugged twice by supporters of the Austrians. The Bulifon firm had the lucrative contract of printing the weekly *Avvisi di Napoli*, the official state newspaper which carried news items as well as announcements of new operas, information on the completion of art works, and notice of the publication or arrival of new books in the city. Their paper, needless to say, was extremely pro-French and even tried to disguise French defeats. Behind his back Bulifon was referred to as *il buffone* (the Buffoon); and several anonymous, scurrilous poems

² Ellen T. Harris, *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 82-89, 142-143.

in dialect about him were posted about the city. One sonnet satirized the bullock befriending Frenchman (*chi ha credito a francise è no coglione*).³ Bulifon could well put up with that kind of abuse since he had acquired contracts for most of the viceregal printing budget. Perhaps as late as 1706 Antonio Bulifon retired, it is not known where he went or when he died.

In 1706 a manuscript was circulated with the title *Osservazioni polititici, come le quali fassi apertamente che la quiete universale d'Europa non deriva della monarca delle Spagne ma del repartimento della Francia in più principati* (Political observations which make clear that universal peace in Europe will not result from the partition of Spain but from fracturing France into many petty principalities).⁴ The language and metaphor of political and philosophic quarrels were not so far apart: the author speaks of the *degli atomi fantastici di Epicuri* (congeries of Epicurus' atoms) to describe what the partition of Spain might look like. The author, later, used words and ideas associated with Descartes' physics when he talked of corpuscles being arranged to form a new hypothetical universe.⁵ The author equated French politics with the worse excesses described by Tacitus and advocated by Machiavelli. The antiwar spirit in this piece was about as strong as its anti-French bias.

The official tone in 1706 was optimistic. Biagio Majoli de Avitabile marshalled his Arcadians to publish another volume praising Philip. On April 20, 1707 Raillard published a volume celebrating the marriage of Cecilia Gaetano and Antonio di Sangro. The volume was dedicated to Aurora SanSeverino, an Arcadian, and related to the bride through marriage. The contributors included a number of promoters of Descartes' ideas. Among the participants were Giannelli, Cristofaro, Lucina and Lombardo; also invited to write were Gioacchino Poeta and Agnello Spagnuolo who became part of the philosopher-antiquarian group associated with Vico, Doria and Egizio, among others.

³ BSNP MSS XXXI B 3, "Frater Constanzius", ll. 51r-52v. More poems concerning Bulifon are in the introduction to Antonio Bulifon, *Giornale di Napoli dal MDXLVII al MDCCVI*, vol. primo MDXLVII-MDCXCI, ed. Nino Cortese (Napoli: Società Napoletana di Storia Patria, 1932), pp. xvi-xx.

⁴ BNN MSS XV F 12, ll. 259r-270r. The title in this manuscript is written in a blue ink which was distinctive for this period. It also suggests that some unusual care was taken in its preparation for private circulation.

⁵ BNN MSS XV F 12, 261v, 268r. The same volume contains a number of printed broadsides and pamphlets in support of the Empire and its candidate for ruler of Spain.

The Austrian Invasion

On June 22 the Austrian troops left Rome and headed south for Naples. Despite some brave planning and pronouncements, it became clear that the Viceroy Ferdinando Pacheco, Duke of Escalona, was not going to attempt to face the Austrian veterans in the open field. News of the approaching Germans filled the city with fear and many chose to put their prized possessions in the care of neighborhood monasteries for safe keeping. Their fears were not so much a response to the invading army but to the anticipated depredations of their fellow citizens. They weren't being overly cautious. The Austrians marched into Naples on July 7, which Constanzio noted in his diary was the day Masienello's Revolution began in 1647. Did he anticipate a repetition of that event, or was he simply noting a strange coincidence? The Neapolitan mob demolished the new equestrian statue made by Lorenzo Vaccaro for Philip. The statue had stood in the Piazza in front of Il Gesù. Right down the street near the Palazzo Maddaloni was Bulifon's bookshop; it was destroyed by the same mob.⁶ This event, I should note was not part of a more generalized looting, it was a focused attack. The violence of the crowd indicated that the urban poor knew who the printers were, drew distinctions between the various shops and had clear opinions about what they sold. To be sure ransacking a printshop should not be equated with literacy, nevertheless the incident confirms the importance of the printed word as a part of public life in Naples. By sacking Bulifon's shop, they were attacking the monopoly his firm had acquired publishing the news, *Avvisi*; and, the crowd may be viewed as expressing a desire to restore to the public sphere the activities of the press and the openness associated with bookstores.

Charles Thompson, an English traveller visiting Naples at this time, commented on the rejoicing over the Austrian success. Then, Vesuvius began to erupt reaching its greatest violence on August 3. The liquification of the blood of San Gennaro calmed the crowds who

⁶ SNSP MSS XXXI B 3, "Frater Constanzius", ll. 51v-52r, 69r, 73r-74r. Giuseppe Galasso, *Napoli spagnola dopo Masaniello* (1982), 725, notes that on the same date in 1495 Ferdinando II of Aragon returned to Naples. There is an anonymous diary now in the Marciana which also describes the events of this same period. BMV MSS It VI 112, 5888, *Giornale delli rumori in Napoli dal 6 Luglio 1707 finì li 16 Agosto 1708*, 26r-27r. According to Gaspare De Caro, "Bulifon, Antonio", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 15, 61, the mob was incited by the rival printer Parrino.

had begun to fear that God was punishing them for turning from Spain. Like Addison, Thompson was fascinated by the Neapolitans' delight in drinking any beverage with snow. And his eye noted that almost all of Naples' grain was being carried in English and Dutch vessels.⁷ Towards the end of the month the Neapolitans were encouraged to celebrate with enthusiasm the feast of St. Anne on July 26. These festivities were to honor Naples' new ally the Protestant Queen Anne of England.

The following year Parrino published an almanac, one of the most popular items regularly sold in bookstores. It contained predictions concerning the death of Louis XIV and of Pope Clement. This sounds like the Austrian's wish list, but an order from the Bishop prohibited its sale. Parrino was on much safer ground with another publication produced in 1708, *Compendio istorico o sian memorie delle notizie più vere, e cose più notabili, e degne da sapersi, accaduta felicissima entrata delle sempre gloriose truppe cesaree nel Regno, ed in questa città di Napoli, dal principio della loro marcia presso Bologna, sin doppo l'acquisto di Gaeta* (An historical compendium or memoir of the most important notable events worthy of being known of what happened in the happy entrance of the ever glorious Imperial troops into the Kingdom and to Naples from the beginning of their march near Bologna up until the conquest of Gaeta). The fulsome title is matched by a four hundred page book detailing the Austrian conquest. Parrino noted that the illuminations at the beginning of the month were matched by the fiery display of Vesuvius at the end of July. Vico was commissioned to write an inscription dedicated to San Gennaro requesting his moderation of the volcano; San Felice or perhaps Vaccaro designed the monument.⁸ Parrino recounts Vico's composition of another set of inscriptions prepared for those who died in the Macchia Conspiracy. Vico did these with Benedetto Laudati, who was later to provide Vico with the sacred approvals of the *De antiquissima* and the related replies.⁹

⁷ Charles Thompson, *The Travels*, (Reading: 1744), p. 208.

⁸ Anthony Blunt, *Neapolitan Baroque & Rococo Architecture*, p. 189; on Vico's role, see Giambattista Vico, *Scritti vari e pagine sparse*, Scrittori d'Italia, v. 174, ed. Fausto Nicolini (Bari: Laterza, 1940), pp. 281–283.

⁹ Domenico Parrino, *Compendio istorico* (Napoli: Parrino, 1708), p. 385.

The Consequences of the Conquest: the Cardinal and the Cyclops

The real political and economic consequences of the Austrian conquest were to prove far less important than they seemed at first. Genuine reform and massive changes were expected; it was hoped that Naples might return to its former status as a thriving commercial center; but, no one had a clear idea how a transformation like that might be brought about. But the Austrian invasion of Naples was to have marvelous consequences for the development of Italian opera. Vienna was a center for opera and it was handsomely supported by the Hapsburg Emperor. Leopold I had over 100 musicians on his household staff; every season a dozen or so operas or major new works were introduced in Vienna. His son Joseph sponsored the building of a new opera house in Vienna in 1699. And, besides being a grand patron, Joseph had a natural ability as a musician and composed as well. His works are still performed today and are of sufficient quality to earn him a place in the history of music. Joseph I's conquest of Naples opened up southern Italy in a direct way to the musical life of Vienna and remained part of its tradition. The survivors of the Macchia conspiracy returned as heroes to Naples. Among those returning was the Marquis of Rofrano whose loyalty to Vienna has been immortalized by Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal in Act II of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Rofrano is the family name of Octavian, who in this act brings the rose on behalf of Baron Ochs to Sophia. The audience sees Sophia hastily getting ready to receive the rose and to meet the messenger; an off-stage chorus, representing voices from the street, sing "Rofrano" identifying the noble ancestors of the Rosenkavalier.

The most famous musical product from the first year of the Austrian occupation was Handel's serenata *Acis, Galatea e Polifemo* which he wrote in Naples in the early summer of 1708. (Handel, in England in 1718 did another *Acis and Galatea*, essentially a new work, with a libretto written mostly by John Gay. The exact date of the first performance is unknown; if it was after the summer of 1718 the subject would suggest topical references to Spain's surprise conquest of Sicily—the home of Polyphemus and Galatea.) Handel had arrived in Italy in the Fall of 1706 and had gone first to Florence, then to Rome. In Rome Handel completed commissions for Prince Ruspoli and two Venetian Cardinals, Ottoboni and Grimani. Grimani was the special representative of Vienna, Ottoboni supported the

French, while Ruspoli seems to have behaved badly to both sides. Handel, though, stayed outside of, or perhaps beneath their controversies. Controversy between Cardinals was very real but was it serious? Cardinals were part of an elite club and their encounters and rivalries have the air of the well-heeled jocularly. One can imagine the members of College of Cardinals getting together for the equivalent of a couple of drinks after a good fight. Handel went to Naples sometime in May of 1708 and one would presume that Cardinal Grimani arranged contacts for him. Grimani himself was on his way to Naples, for starting on July 1 he became Viceroy of Naples. *Acì* was first performed on July 19, but by that time Handel was back in Rome. But he still had contact with Grimani for Handel set Grimani's opera *Agrippina* for the Venice season; its first performance was soon after the beginning of Carnival, which in Venice began on December 26, 1709. Somehow Grimani managed to do the libretto for this work though he was Viceroy of Naples.

Giovanni Morelli in a 1981 conference noted that practically all of Handel's work composed in Italy during the time of his visit could readily be viewed as being shaped decisively by the struggles of the War of the Spanish Succession. The opera *Agrippina* had as its subject matter a lightly veiled allegory satirizing the machinations of Papal Rome; several of the cantatas Handel wrote in Rome make direct allusions to contemporary events and Morelli suggests ways of relating other works to this context. The only significant exception to this might seem to be the *Acì* serenata but Morelli proposed an interpretation that makes it as much a contemporary allegory as was the *Agrippina*.¹⁰ He argued that not only did Grimani shape the *Agrippina* libretto, he had a significant hand in the *Acì* libretto as well. He suggested that the serenata repeated the story of recent Neapolitan history beginning with the Macchia conspiracy; the Pope is represented by Polyphemus, and when Polyphemus strikes down Acis in the end, the rock represents the Roman Inquisition with which the

¹⁰ Giovanni Morelli, "Monsù Endel, servitore di due padroni (Per un nuova 'giustificazione' dell'arte allegorica)", in *Händel in Italia*, Terzo Festival Vivaldi (Venice: Giorgio Cini, 1981), pp. 72–82. Roberto Pagano, *Scarlatti*, pp. 233, 308–309, describes some of the negative criticism of Morelli's view raised by Furnari. Furnari suggested that the piece was not for a marriage of the Duke of Alvito—Handel had already returned to Rome by the wedding date of July 19, 1708—but, he believed the libretto was written by members of the Alvito family who were also Arcadians.

Pope intends to crush Naples. Galatea in this conception is Spain (that is Spain as ruled by Charles the Hapsburg, not the Bourbon Philip's Spain). Acis and Galatea are faithful to each other even in death, and Polyphemus seems to admit his final defeat by joining in the final chorus affirming true love and constancy. This is an "exhilarating" hypothesis, to use Pagano's expression; it certainly makes us reexamine the apolitical approach typical of general thinking about the pastoral. Before commenting on this interpretation, let me state that from the evidence we don't know who wrote the libretto. Before wandering in the wilderness of the Arcadian pastoral let me state what remains one of the most remarkable features of this work: the way Handel assimilated Neapolitan musical taste and style, imitating it but fashioning a work that makes a distinctive commentary on and a contribution to this tradition.

The standard account of *Acis* has been that it was composed to celebrate a marriage at the house of the Duke of Alvito on July 19, 1708. Some question has been raised about the appropriateness of such a story for a wedding, a plausible objection; though, from the poetry I have seen composed for similar occasions, such a subject would not be out of line. The pastoral style itself had such powerful associations which tended to reduce the significance of plot for the sake of character types. As far as I know, no celebratory volume for the Alvito wedding exists. This in itself would not be unusual and it may be connected with the absence of a book of poetry praising Naples' new Austrian rulers. The absence of such a publication suggests that they weren't funded or welcome. The Bourbons had commissioned a number of works from the Arcadians, but the Austrians didn't continue this practice. Arcadia, like the Papacy had its center in Rome. It may have been known that Queen Christina, the spiritual founder of the Arcadia, had had designs on Naples, and that she intended to bestow this wished for inheritance on a Bourbon heir.¹¹ Grimani was generous with his patronage; the absence of any Arcadian productions after their recent activity probably indicates official disapproval of this organization.

Still none of this would require that a Neapolitan librettist prefer anonymity; part of the purpose of celebratory poetry was to promote

¹¹ Susanna Åkerman, "Queen Christina of Sweden and Messianic Thought" in *Sceptics, Millenarians and Jews*, ed. David S. Katz and Jonathan I. Israel (NY: Brill, 1990), 142-160, esp. 158-160.

an author's particular poetic strengths. Handel, even at this stage of his career, had a decided interest in the language and style in the texts he set to music.¹² Would he have just set any libretto handed to him by the family hiring him for the wedding celebration? How was the libretto obtained? Handel was only in Naples a little over two months, and his connection with the Dukes of Alvito would have probably been through Cardinal Grimani. Grimani knew in February of 1708 that he was at last destined to obtain the Viceregency. Handel left for Naples in April, and it is possible that Grimani proposed and wrote the libretto. But why write an allegory about Rome's failure in Naples? That was already a year old.

The interpretation Morelli gives of *Acì* is not entirely persuasive to me; the idea of putting the work in a political context makes sense, but does he have the right context? Could Clement, a genteel man from Urbino, whose elegance was compared to his compatriot Raphael, really be represented by a cyclops? To be compared with Raphael was probably the highest compliment the eighteenth century could make, and from available evidence it seems a fair representation of Clement. If he were from Sicily, linking him to the cyclopes would be part of Arcadian good fun. For Morelli's argument to work our Venetian Cardinal would have to accept an Austrian view of the world. While one can readily imagine Grimani working for the Austrian cause, it is to be doubted that a Venetian would also simply believe in Austrian ambition. The select group gathered for the Alvito marriage had little interest in continuing Naples' subjugation to Spain whether it was ruled by Hapsburgs or Bourbons. Grimani knew of the ambitions of the Macchia conspirators to form an aristocratic republic for he worked closely with them and his subsequent tenure as viceroy indicated that his sympathies lay this way. An aristocratic republic would be more like what Grimani knew from Venice.

In Venice, Grimani's home town, mocking a pope, enjoying the jokes of the *Agrippina* wouldn't be such an unusual thing; there was a long tradition of Venetians fighting and lampooning Rome. To compare Claudio in the opera to Clement could make some nasty sense and be an occasion of subtle wit; was there any grounds to believe that a buffoon like Polyphemus would have the resonance Morelli proposed? In Naples it was a different matter entirely. The

¹² Ellen Harris, *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition*, p. 272, 206-207.

Agrippina was a public allegory of the devious diplomatic world of Clement's Rome; I would suggest we could see the *Acì* as Grimani's private allegory of his own aspirations in Naples. I suggest that Grimani's role was represented by the *Acì* figure, who, carries on a clandestine relationship with his Galatea, Naples. Grimani, before and after the Macchia conspiracy, remained an important contact between Neapolitans and the Austrians in Vienna. He worked closely with Charles III in Barcelona and had a more distant relation with Leopold and then Joseph in Vienna. From Charles he had been more or less led to believe he would be appointed Viceroy when Naples was liberated. He was bitterly disappointed to learn that Count von Martinitz had been selected by Joseph to the position; Martinitz was replaced by Count von Daun in November of 1707, a supporter of Charles and Grimani. Von Daun passed on the vicerealty to Grimani on July 1, 1708, just weeks before the *Acì* performance.¹³

The allegorical plot would be that *Acì* (Grimani) had a long standing relationship with the nymph Galatea (Naples). But the monster Polyphemus (Martinitz or perhaps Joseph) intervened desirous of having Galatea for himself. By violence Polyphemus attempted to gain Galatea and he then squealched *Acì*, but in the end *Acì* gets his Galatea after all in the form of a river. Grimani got the viceregency in the end. This reading would give a particular reason for why Handel chose to have Polyphemus first enter the stage with the military sound of a triadic trumpet call. The trumpet accompaniment would not simply be a bow to Neapolitan taste but would represent the bluster of the sudden Austrian invasion and would fit in very nicely with the secret agenda of the piece. It seems plausible that a Venetian Cardinal and Neapolitan nobles might well agree on the barbarousness of German invaders from the North; and having been conquered by them, to lampoon them in the privacy of one's own palazzo. With such an allegory Grimani would have genuine reasons to conceal his authorship. To make fun of a Pope in Venice, was not unusual or particularly dangerous. And Naples had its own ways of laughing at the clergy. But to satirize the Emperor or his agent, that required more circumspection. If we accept Morelli's general

¹³ Anna Casella, "Costituzione e ordine politico a Napoli all'arrivo degli Austriaci" in *Il Trentino nel Settecento fra Sacro Romano Impero e antichi stati italiani*, ed. Cesare Mozzarelli and Giuseppe Olmi (Bologna: Mulino, 1985) 285-321, provides a detailed description of this transition, esp. 310-321.

observation that most of the writing Handel in this Italian journey was written in direct response to the political situation and patronage demands created by the War of the Spanish Succession, this version, seems to me, to make more sense of Handel's Neapolitan phase. The evidence for this remains circumstantial and provides no refutation to the counter argument that sometimes in a pastoral a sheep is a sheep.

The Controversy Concerning Ecclesiastical Revenues

Grimani knew how to attack the Pope Neapolitan style; instead of opera composers he turned to the lawyers. In this matter Nicolò Caravita led the way when shortly after the Austrian invasion he published *Nullum jus Pontificis Maximi in Regno Neapolitano* (The Pope has no right in the Kingdom of Naples). Caravita was an Arcadian, a leading participant in the Inquisition controversy, and a guiding force behind the poetry and the Academy associated with Medina Coeli. This work was published at Naples, though the place on the title page is listed as *Alethopoli* (Truthville).¹⁴ The nominal argument is on behalf of the rights of the Hapsburg Charles, but could have been used to support any Neapolitan ruler. Caravita's work was a continuation of the previous investiture controversy, and the discussion of the limits (if any) about sovereign authority that arose in the Medina Coeli. *Nullum jus* had a more detailed historical analysis and was adventurous in its citation of heretical authors to support its argument. His historical approach basically repeated that of Biscardi and Danio but his conception of sovereignty was more absolutist and made no concession to a feudal or more aristocratic model of government, such as that presented by Tomaso D'Aquino.¹⁵ It may not

¹⁴ *Nullum jus* was reprinted in 1788 and translated into Italian in 1790 at the time of a new controversy between Rome and Naples on the Investiture matter. The translator was Eleonora Fonseca Pimentel; her introduction explained the work's intellectual tradition and described its influence. It is to be hoped that the accomplishments of this remarkable publicist and revolutionary become more widely known to Anglo-American scholars especially to those interested in the history of women. Susan Sontag concludes her romance *The Volcano Lover* with a monologue spoken by her.

¹⁵ Biscardi had become the most important jurist during the last years of Philip's administration. While he was moved out of office by Martiniz his opinions and support were relied on. Raffaele Ajello, "Gli 'afrancesados' a Napoli nella prima metà del Settecento" in *I Borbone di Napoli e i Borbone di Spagna: un bilancio storiografico*, ed. Mario Di Pinto (Napoli: Guida, 1985), 1, 135-150.

be irrelevant to note that D'Aquino remained loyal to Philip; he was imprisoned by the Austrians and at the end of the war was part of the general exchange of captives. He was forced to seek exile in Spain where Philip gave him honorable employment in the Spanish bureaucracy.

Caravita took what could be called a Hobbesian position; he defined sovereignty as indivisible and hence not communicable to any other power or legal body. Hobbes' *De cive* (On the Citizen) is one of the sources he cites; and in the spirit of Hobbes, he does not hesitate to attack Bellarmine, the authority on ecclesiastical governance. In this regard Caravita can be described as following certain aspects of the legal thought of the Jesuits Suárez and Molina, and the Dominican Vitoria. Caravita's enthusiasm for clear and broad sovereign powers carried with it an implicit attack on baronial privilege. This stance may be why Grimani gave ambiguous support to Caravita. Part of the significance of Caravita's work was that it was published and not merely intended for manuscript circulation.

In August of 1708 Grimani heated up his campaign against Rome, and it was only then that Caravita's book caused an appreciable stir. The anonymous diarist noted on August 4 that a new book had been published by Caravita called *De nullitate ellezzione Pontifice* (That the Pope had no influence). The inaccurate title indicates that the author had not seen the book; but there is no reason to doubt the date as marking the book's sudden notoriety. Such a conjunction of circumstance suggests that Grimani chose to promote the work's circulation. Prior to this, because of the work's dubious origins, it had not been aggressively marketed, but now with this semi-official sanction it became the talk of the town. In the following year Caravita published a revision of his papers on the Inquisition controversy of the early 1690s. The publisher was Giovan Lorenzo Acampora, the same who had issued the poetry collection of 1701–1702.¹⁶ This work, published in Italian, lacked the official approvals but it seemed to also be part of Grimani's propaganda war against Rome.

But besides Caravita's work Grimani needed some specific attacks on Rome that summer of 1708; he wanted to put direct pressure on the Papacy.¹⁷ Grimani, in conjunction with Joseph and Charles

¹⁶ Acampora, an *abate*, was also in the anticurialist group, and in the 1720s a faithful friend of Giannone.

¹⁷ In the Marciana Library in Venice a manuscript BMV It VI 307 (6194) contains

sequestered the funds of all ecclesiastical benefices that left Naples—this was income primarily used to support cardinals and other church officials living in Rome. This action had a particularly adverse effect on the income of Cardinal Ottoboni who had been his primary rival in Rome. Instead of the great names of the 1690s, Caravita, Danio, Valletta or Biscardi, Grimani chose to commission three men of the new generation, Alessandro Riccardi, Gaetano Argento and Costantino Grimaldi, to attack the current methods of administering benefices. None of them men had been strongly associated with Spanish patronage. Grimani's brief to these men had a greater level of risk for them than the controversies concerning the Inquisition and Investiture. It was generally recognized that the establishment of a new Inquisition was something about which rational men might disagree; but to argue about who could control the administration of benefices cut to the heart of ecclesiastical authority and independence. In the controversies with the Inquisition and investiture the participants ran little risk of a shameful condemnation by the Index. But in this case, with publication required, it should have been clear to the three participants that even with the protection of the viceroy, to tangle with Rome on the issue of benefices was to ask for trouble.

Given the explosive character of the topic we may well wonder why these men were willing to take the risks of ecclesiastical censure. Grimaldi's autobiography describes how he came to write the piece, but he doesn't give much of a sense of his deeper motives. It may be fair to speculate that having failed to parlay his refutations of Benedetti into a brilliant success, he saw this controversy as a way of jumpstarting his career. Alessandro Riccardi, a Neapolitan born in 1660 and trained as a lawyer, had attended the school of Gregorio Caloprese. In the 1690s he was associated with Nicolò Capasso, Saverio Pansuti and Carlo Majello. It is not surprising, given these friends that along with Caravita, Doria and Vico, he participated in the volume celebrating Charles II's recovery of health in 1697. But, despite these connections he did not get into the *Medina Coeli*. One story concerning him in the 1690s was that he was intending to take clerical orders. However, when he learned that his sister had clandestinely married an impoverished academic he went out and beat up the priest who had performed the ceremony. This effectively put

an interesting collection of letters and proclamations on this controversy, especially copies of letters between the Emperor Joseph, Grimani and Pope Clement.

the kibosh on his ecclesiastical career.¹⁸ He seemed to have spent years preoccupied with work in the law courts. In 1707, fired by the vision of an Austrian reform, he proposed a plan to revive the Neapolitan economy.¹⁹ It is not surprising that he had a brilliant career in the Austrian administration in Italy.

Gaetano Argento, born in 1661 in Calabria near Cosenza, came to Naples to seek his fortune in the law courts.²⁰ Like Riccardi he was trained by Biscardi, he also spent the early eighteenth century making a name for himself in the courts. We are fortunate to be able to see in San Giovanni a Carbonara, Ferdinando Sanfelice's magnificent tomb for Argento which was executed in marble by Francesco Pagano. Puti pull back a curtain revealing Argento, full of energy despite his being represented as genuflecting. The figure represents the lawyerly virtues of authority mingled with kindness and clarity of vision. All three lawyers were influenced by the spectacular success of Francesco D'Andrea who, before he was barely 40, had achieved an international reputation for his defense of the rights of Spain's Charles II in Brabant. Perhaps they too could repeat history and match D'Andrea's level of fame and wealth.

Alessandro Riccardi was the first to publish with a short pamphlet in the form of a letter, dated June 18, 1708. The publication, however, was delayed until Grimani was on the scene, and it appeared under the pseudonym Renato Serra d'Isca. There was no indication of printer or place of publication. Works on ecclesiastical benefices are frequently appalling pieces of erudition, but this short work has none of those bristling features. The argument is fairly straightforward and was essentially an attack on entitlement programs. As Riccardi saw it, every year more and more of the Kingdom's money was being committed to support ecclesiastical activities, but the worst of it was that most of this money did not stay in the Kingdom but was passed on to support the lavish lifestyles of Cardinals resident in Rome. Added to this abuse was the fact that the Church had tax exempt status; and every year it acquired more and more of the

¹⁸ Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Alessandro Riccardi" in *Dal Muratori al Cesarotti*, vol. 5, *Politici ed economisti del primo Settecento* (Milano: Ricciardi, 1978), p. 699.

¹⁹ Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Alessandro Riccardi e le richieste del 'ceto civile' all'Austria nel 1707", *Rivista storica italiana*, 1969, 81, 745-777; Riccardi's essay is appended to the article.

²⁰ Elvira Gencarelli, "Argento, Gaetano", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 4, 122-125.

Kingdom's taxable assets. Riccardi's solution was to regain this lost revenue, prevent more property from escaping from the tax rolls, and prohibit money earned from ecclesiastical investment in the Kingdom from leaving it. Riccardi was convinced that if this flow of gold was stopped the Neapolitan economy would quickly revive.

Two works attacking Riccardi's pamphlet appeared very promptly; one was by Giovanni Bortoni, the other by Carlo Majello who had once been his friend.²¹ Both works were anonymous and make no mention of a publisher or place of publication.²² Majello had been the author of the what might be called the official, that is pro-Bourbon, history of the Macchia Conspiracy. Majello was a supporter of the Cartesians at Naples and had used his influence to change teaching at the Naples seminary. He was known to oppose the probabilism of the Jesuits and was friends of Giannettasio; he was a regular user of Valletta's library and a close friend of Capasso and Riccardi who had once been his teacher. Riccardi, in his attack Majello's work, calls the author a *giovane laico*, a young lay person, and says his work was full of errors. Had Majello decided he no longer had a future in Naples with the Austrian invasion? Did this prompt his attack on Riccardi's book or was he asked to do it? Politics, power and religious feeling were stronger loyalties than those linking together some supporters of Descartes. The 1710 Galileo edition was, in this context, a statement that Italy had Moderns of its own and had no need to rely on French writers. This argues for the relative security of the moderns in Naples. And, it should be noted in this controversy that Riccardi and Majello kept to the issue, and did not engage in *ad hominem* arguments.²³ His refutation of Riccardi takes a page from the Moderns at Naples and hands it back to them. One of his arguments was based on the Galilean principle of the separation of disciplines. A member of the laity, he said, should not leave his proper sphere to encourage the state to meddle with what concerns the clergy. The clergy can be criticized but, they have their own procedures that should be invoked.

²¹ On Giovanni Bortoni, or Bortone, or Bertone, see Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Bortoni, Giovanni" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 13, 153–156.

²² Giovanni Bortone, *Risposta alla scrittura pubblicata il 18 giugno 1708*; Carlo Majello, *Regni neapolitani erga Petri cathedram religio adversus calumnias anonymi vindicata*; Majello followed this with a two volume work published in Rome, *Apologeticus christianus quo anonymi conviciatoris error veritate, livor charitate dispellitur*.

²³ Pasquale Lopez, *Riforma cattolica e vita religiosa e culturale a Napoli* (Napoli: Istituto Editorial del Mezzogiorno, 1964), pp. 213–223, 224–252.

Riccardi did not accept this argument—we all pick and choose when we want to be interdisciplinary, and the times we want to hold to disciplinary boundaries. Natural science and theology were regarded as disciplines that should be kept distinct; and, while Riccardi recognized a separation of Church and State, in his view the Church had confused that relationship. The Church needed to yield or return certain functions to the state before both could continue in their separate disciplinary traditions. Riccardi answered Bortoni's and Majello's challenge quickly, if we take the date given at the end of the piece, August 28, 1708 as representing when he finished it rather than the 1709 date that appears on the title page. This work was dedicated to Gaetano Argento. He used the false place of publication of Cologne and Pier Martello as the printer.²⁴ A number of illicit Neapolitan books were printed by this Martello of Cologne. Does this mean they were done by the same printer or was Martello's name used for other reasons?

Sometime in the midst of these exchanges Gaetano Argento published his *De re beneficiaria*. For reasons that I have not fathomed the printer chose not to paginate this several hundred page book. Argento argues that only those who know the local circumstances can properly administer benefices; that foreigners and non-residents who receive such income was contrary to their intent. And, if the clergy refused to remedy such abuses especially after admonishment from the state, then it was the duty of the state to intervene. The sovereign should restore benefices to their original purpose. His arguments and those of Riccardi have their basis in the principles of trust between Church and State which characterized the language of the previous controversies on Investiture and the Inquisition. In this case, as they saw it, the Church had betrayed its trust; now it was the duty of the long-suffering state to set things to rights.

At first glance we may be surprised to see Costantino Grimaldi as a participant in this controversy and to find him immersed in the details of canon law. After all Grimaldi was one of the few Neapolitans who were willing to take on the big issues of God, the meaning of life and how all this relates to Descartes' thought. On this occasion he set aside the persona of the informed Cartesian and put on the mask of the canon lawyer. Grimaldi's work sprawled across two

²⁴ Alessandro Riccardi, *Considerazioni sopr'al nuovo libro* (Colonia: Pier Martello, 1709); BNN MSS XV F 53, 7r-16r, "Alessandro Ricciardi in risposta Carlo Majello".

volumes, volume one appeared at the very end of 1708 and volume two in January of 1709. His title *Considerationi teologico-politiche fatte a pro degli editti di S. Maestà Cattolica intorno alle rendite Ecclesiastiche del Regno di Napoli* (*Theological and Political considerations concerning the Edict of His Catholic Majesty concerning Ecclesiastical Taxation in the Kingdom of Naples*) identifies his subject; his text is packed full of references to Canon and Roman law. Excessive annotation and unrelenting erudition was part of the game in these controversies. Each reference might contain half a dozen “relevant” citations, and there are at least ten such per page. I have worked through some of his notes but I don’t have the training to evaluate his use of evidence and sources.²⁵ In this discipline the ability to recall an immense amount of detail with supporting authorities was considered the sign of learning and proof. Grimaldi’s general argument was that the State had the right to tax ecclesiastics and ecclesiastical benefices if it desired.

Grimaldi’s political vocabulary lacked the precision used by Capasso in his *Medina Coeli* paper on natural right. Unlike Capasso who drew a distinction between natural right and natural law, Grimaldi used the terms almost interchangeably. His typical reaction to what he thinks is wrong is to describe it as contrary to *diritto di natura, canonici, e civile* (natural law, canon law and civil law). This kind of categorical denunciation made no real distinction between these different rights; it becomes more like a formulaic phrase expressing disapproval. Instead of developing a more precise political vocabulary, Grimaldi preferred the language of conscience; he appealed to what he called *un lume naturale* (a natural light). He relied on this light or innate moral sense to identify right and wrong and to create sympathy for his argument; it wasn’t just an argument of abstract rights. The light of nature made things inescapably clear; with this uncompromising moral claim we see him continuing his attack against the casuistry promoted by Benedetti and most Jesuits.

On March 2 of 1709 Gian Vincenzo Gravina wrote to Francesco Pignatelli, his major Neapolitan correspondent, that he was delighted to see what the controversy had produced. But he added that his joy did not get the same reaction from the Pope and his men.²⁶ Gravina

²⁵ Angelo Anzani, the bishop of Campagna from 1736 to 1770, is a more competent judge. He believed that Grimaldi’s work marked the beginning of a dark period in the ecclesiastical history of southern Italy. Gabriele De Rosa, *Vescovi popolo e magia nel Sud*, 33–35.

²⁶ Gianvincenzo Gravina, *Curia Romana e Regno di Napoli: cronache politiche e religiose*

was indulging in understatement for in January of that year the Papacy had been compelled to sign an humiliating peace agreement with Austria. But both sides delayed fulfilling certain provisions and continued to lash out at each other. In May of 1709 the Index condemned Riccardi's *Ragioni*; interestingly, they never condemned his attack on Majello and Bortoni. In February of 1710 Argento, Caravita's Inquisition essay and the first volume of Grimaldi's work was added to the Inquisition; volume 2 was added the following month. And, in September of that year Caravita's *Nullum jus* was put on the list. Cardinal Grimani died in September. In April of the following year the Joseph I, who was in his early 30s, died; ironically, a few days later Louis XIV's only surviving son died. By this time Riccardi had been appointed to a key post advising Charles in Barcelona; Grimaldi had been promoted to the Council of Santa Chiara; Argento had been asked to join the Collateral Council; even Majello had been called to Rome where he served with distinction in the Vatican Library.

But what had all this really meant in terms of rationalizing Church/State relations?²⁷ In the end, not much. Spain took on the role of being the bully to the Church; and much to everyone's surprise Spain was to accomplish more in this area than anyone had anticipated. On April 22, 1709 Philip broke off diplomatic relations with the Papacy; in this the Bourbon was continuing the tradition of Charles V and Philip II—though his moves against the Inquisition represented something new. The lesson in the end was that political expediency was more important than reform. The high handed claims and lofty principles which had characterized the controversy no longer had a place, but the writers in the struggle had all been rewarded prestigious jobs. Grimaldi seemed to be the one with the most bad feelings about the placement of his book on the Index. He decided, in 1710, to prepare a manuscript attacking this decision. In this work, clearly intended for limited manuscript circulation, he left aside the mask of the canon lawyer. It is a fast paced essay which lacks the repetitive, hectoring quality of his refutations of Benedetti. He was

nelle lettere a Francesco Pignatelli (1690–1712), ed. Antonio Sarubbi (Napoli: Guida, 1972), p. 317.

²⁷ Giuseppe Galasso, "Doria: il governo spagnolo a Napoli e i problemi del Regno" in his *La filosofia in soccorso de' governi: La cultura napoletana del Settecento* (Napoli: Guida, 1989), 198–208.

particularly outraged at the vitriol poured out in the condemnation of his book. Apparently even the hesiarchs Luther and Calvin pale in comparison with the evil contained in Grimaldi's works. His volumes were described as if they were far more dangerous than the venom of Spinoza. But the poor fellows working on the Index gave him quite a laugh. He imagined them as pale and wan scholastics grubbing over his text, so eager to condemn him that they spent all their violence against volume one, and scarcely mentioned the second, which in Grimaldi's mind was the more devastating to the Papacy's claims about benefices. He cites Bayle, Sarpi and several book review journals on the improprieties and injustices committed by the way Rome judged books.²⁸ Grimaldi all but laughs at the ignorance of the reviewers for the Index. In the end he was dispirited and concluded that anyone who wrote on the issue of benefices, irrespective of the merit of the argument, and was the least bit critical would be condemned by Rome.

Politicizing the Arts?

What, one may wonder, did this conflict mean to those who participated in the ransacking of Bulifon's print shop? The Neapolitans had seen the extravagant celebrations of the triumph of Austria and its vicious fight with the Papacy. At the beginning of 1710 Pope Clement was struck down with an illness and almost died; although he lived on until 1721, he had lost his energy and strength. Grimani died later that year and Joseph followed in the next; those authors who supported the Pope retired to Rome, while the lawyers whose books were condemned were awarded the most prestigious jobs in the law courts.²⁹ What, indeed, was one to make of it? In form, at least it was an inversion of the kinds of arguments developed about the relationship of science and theology. Grimani's men claimed the superiority of the political over the religious and behind his actions was the more familiar "might makes right". The Church, on the

²⁸ BNN MSS XV E 23, "*Avviso critico e apologetico intorno alla bolla e alla censura fatta...*", 184 pp. 12, 16, 26, 39, 138.

²⁹ Grimani's sudden death on September 26, 1710, created an interesting hiatus in the Naples' viceregal administration. See Francesca Cammisa, "Nobili e togati nel Consiglio Collaterale napoletano: il dibattito costituzionale nell'intrregno del 1710", *Archivio storico per le province napoletane* (1984), 235-262.

other hand, argued for a kind of separation of governance structures and that the methods of the one should not interfere with the other.

The impact of the controversy is probably involved with Solimena's 1709 fresco for the sacristy of San Domenico Maggiore. It is titled variously "The Triumph of the Dominican Order", or "The Triumph of the Trinity, Our Lady, Dominican Saints and the Downfall of the Hesiarchs". Solimena had to solve the problem of disproportion of the length to the width of the ceiling. He accomplished this, according to De Dominici, by his judicious placement of figures.³⁰ Giordano had solved a similar problem in his Judith fresco by having a central apotheosis and a story around the edge. Here, Solimena unites the different groups of figures in one grand sweep, *unità della storia* (a unified history) in De Dominici's words. Mary has the central role as she presents St. Dominic, St. Domenichino and other Dominicans to the Trinity; all this activity is supported by the efforts of scores of putti. Meanwhile, angels drive out, or as they appear to the viewer, throw down from the ceiling three muscular hesiarchs, while others are scattered in different directions. (Do these figures stand for Argento, Grimaldi and Riccardi?) There are books at their feet (and one carried by a Dominican); and most of them, at least to one looking up from the floor, appear to be the limp vellum bindings that one would typically get from a bookdealer, not the hard board covers a bookbinder would prepare for a private library. This painting was quickly recognized as a masterpiece and is rated as Solimena's most influential fresco.

How would this triumphal presentation of the expulsion of the heretics and their foul books have been read in Naples at this time? Certainly, the modern hesiarchs weren't being thrown down; they were ascending to positions of power in Naples' judicial pantheon. In marked contrast to what was going on in the street, the fresco represented the virtue of submission to divine sovereignty. Those who attempted in their books and thoughts to subvert this order are represented as being punished by the agents of God's wrath. But the majesty of the Trinity, did not base its authority solely on absolute power, for along with the representation of the Trinity, at the same level, was the cross. Christ chose humanity, and it was this personal love and interest that justifies and legitimizes the lifting up of the

³⁰ Bernardo De Dominici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletani*, 3, 590.

Domenicans as well as the expulsion of the hesiarchs. To someone looking at the image today it seems a typical expression of baroque spirituality. But at the time of its painting a somewhat more ambiguous response would have been possible. Certainly outside of the Sacristy hesiarchs were no longer being thrown down; the literal meaning was a fiction. Solimena's great ceiling obtains the intended meaning of its patrons when its message becomes a ceremonial representation. The political context of 1709 itself showed that the program for the painting no longer described the relation of the Church to modern hesiarchs like Argento, Grimaldi and Riccardi, but the passage of time has resulted in the triumph of genre over context.

Transformations of base actions into virtuous deeds by sovereigns was deemed normal and was part of the *opera seria* tradition. Cardinal Grimani did exactly this in his libretto for *Agrippina*. What might have been represented as a potential civil war or rebellion against the sovereign was depoliticized to a matter of rival lovers and private lusts. The Emperor Claudio graciously renounced his love, showing his stoic self-control, and his magnanimity by pardoning all; and when he calls upon the gods they descend to bless his subjects. Grimani used the character Agrippina to represent another version of politics in which she regards moderation as a sham; as she advised her son Nero: *che al desio di regnar cedon le leggi* (the laws bend before the desire to rule) (Act 1, scene 1). Despite her cynicism even Agrippina was shown mercy in the end. The conventions of the genre prove stronger than political realism or strict justice.

Given what Grimani did write in his *Agrippina* libretto it is interesting to consider a Scarlatti opera, *La principessa fidele* (The Faithful Princess) that opened in early February of 1710. The opera, which might be called a romance, is the story of a Bohemian princess who, disguising herself as a man, goes to Egypt to bring back her betrothed. The libretto by Agostino Piovene had been used the previous season in Venice where it had been set by Gasparini. The libretto was revised for Naples, the requisite comic scenes were added as well as a major revision of the last act which gave the Sultan Aladino a major role. In this scene there are a series of tense moments when a real political conflict seems about to erupt, but each time the Sultan depoliticized the situation, and in the end the opera resolves itself into a series of marriages. Donald Grout has suggested that the printer Parrino may have written these revisions. Would Cardinal Grimani be a more likely candidate? He had brought Scar-

latti back to Naples to be his chief musician.³¹ Grimani, we should remember, was a Venetian, and knew there were limits as to what was possible in politics; despite his clear commitment to reducing Papal involvement outside their immediate territory, his expectations for great change were small.

But to play with artistic conventions of the *lieto fine*, or the happy ending that appealed to a man like Grimani. The *lieto fine* represented some of the tensions of baroque and enlightenment culture. Contrary to hope the sovereign or some such power intervened at the end and explained a conundrum, or reconciled opponents. This created a finale in which there was a splendid stroke, a dazzling *coup*. Such a conception and symbolism was at the heart of baroque statecraft. The *lieto fine* in its essence, represented reform, a radical reform of what had been going on on stage. The *lieto fine* was a model of reform suited to these political values. Opera was one of many baroque celebrations which carried with it the intimation of immortality announcing the arrival of some new god who was about to intervene and set the world straight: for every Ariadne's lament, there was a Bacchus, ready in the wings, to enter and transform her sorrow into joy. The capacity to turn fortune around, to transform a society on a demi-quaver, suited the kinds of startling metamorphoses the baroque arts and sciences sought to achieve. In an instant the stage world would be turned into an almost unbearably happy place; this change would be conjoined with an appropriate but lavish visual display. Fate could be conquered; history undone. We know what Grimani did with *Agrippina*, and I've speculated that he played similar games with *Acì* and perhaps his hand was involved with the *Principessa*?

³¹ Alessandro Scarlatti, *The Faithful Princess*, ed. Donald Grout (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977); and Donald Grout, *Alessandro Scarlatti*, p. 9, 79–80.

CHAPTER EIGHT

AN ITALIAN PERSPECTIVE ON NEAPOLITAN PUBLISHING AND THINKING

By the end of 1709 the Papacy had been humiliated and reduced to neutrality; neutrality as defined by the forces of the Empire. Spain and France were all but expelled from Italy. Even the Venetian government which had remained outside this quarrel, had grounds to be pleased with the results. In July of 1709 Peter the Great had defeated Charles XII's Swedes and Mazeppa's Cossacks at Poltava. The destruction of the Swedish army promised to draw the Ottoman Turks into a war with Russia; and Venice could hope that a Russian-Turkish conflict would be a drawn out affair distracting their traditional opponent. In the event war did break out, but the Russians were defeated and the Ottomans once again turned their attentions to the west; in 1715 Venice was to lose its territories in mainland Greece, but that was in the future.

For Italian scholars, at least those not dependent on Rome, prospects were very promising indeed in that winter of 1709–10. Papal prestige had reached a low point, the new Austrian rulers of Milan and Naples could still stir up enthusiasm by promises. There was some thought of extending their authority and the Austrians looked for excuses to invade Tuscany, but in the end left it alone. Florence remained an important center of patronage. Turin, which a decade earlier seemed headed to become part of Louis XIV's France, or one of his satraps, had successfully defended its political independence and acquired as a new territory the Duchy of Monferrat. According to the subjective impressions of foreign observers Italy was prospering in contrast to the rest of Europe. The new English book review journal, *Memoirs of Literature*, said as much, comparing what they saw as the squalid condition of English letters in contrast to the flourishing state of Italian literature. This period when the War of the Spanish Succession dragged on to its end was the last time in Italy's history until recent decades that it was even possible to think that Italy had the comparative advantage of prosperity in contrast to England.

For foreigners one key sign of Italian accomplishment was its lively publishing industry. And the symbol of its strength was the appearance in 1710 of a new Italian book review journal, *Giornale de'letterati d'Italia*.¹ The journal was published in Venice, perhaps the only city in the peninsula that had the necessary connections with the rest of Italy to make such a venture. Naples lacked an intellectual leader to organize the project, Rome was politically suspect. Magliabecchi in Florence had the connections and the learning to orchestrate such a learned review; but while Magliabecchi was an indefatigable letter writer and a bottomless pit of erudition, he didn't publish. Perhaps he knew too much to write; furthermore he was old and his claim to intellectual authority was privately derided. In any event, the political climate in Florence was not ideal. The Grand Duke Cosimo III was no friend of ideas, let alone new ones; though his son Ferdinando was a different story. The *Giornale*, therefore, chose to dedicate its first issue to him. Ferdinando was a splendid patron; he acquired Madonnas of Raphael and of Andrea del Sarto and recognized the significance of those of Parmigianino. He had commissioned Giovan Battista Foggini to decorate a chapel in *Santissima Annunziata*; in 1705 he had sponsored the first public exhibition of painting held in Florence.² He also supported one of the best orchestras in Italy and employed among other composers, Corelli, Handel and Alessandro Scarlatti. But by 1710, the date of the journal's dedication, Ferdinando was very ill.

The origin of this *Giornale* came from the challenge set down by Ludovico Muratori to Italian learned men to form a Republic of Letters. Among his recommendations was to revive a journal to be published monthly that would identify those works most deserving of a broader audience. In his proposal he described books not only as containers of information but as exquisite objects that might be owned by a collector. The idea that a serious book could also be an ornament is not part of the way we think of packaging learning today.

¹ Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Giornali e società nell'Italia dell'ancien regime" (1668–1789) in *La stampa italiana dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento*, introd. Nicola Tranfaglia (Bari: Laterza, 1980), 126–148. See also, Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Politica, cultura e religione nei giornali italiani del '700" in *Cattolicesimo e lumi nel Settecento italiano*, ed. Mario Rosa (Roma: Herder, 1981) 49–76; and Brendan Dooley, *Science, Politics and Society in Eighteenth-century Italy: The "Giornale de'letterati" and its world* (NY: Garland, 1991).

² Erich Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries 1527–1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 281–83.

For us, such a description suggests the coffee table book. At this time period there was little difference between the gentleman's library and that of the scholar. Our academic publishing is much more puritanical, and presumes its offerings will scarcely ever attract the general reader. Muratori had published his plan to promote Italian learning and letters in 1703 with the title *I primi disegni della repubblica letteraria d'Italia* (Preliminary outline of an Italian literary Republic) and listed Naples as the place of publication. While such a location is not impossible, the work was probably printed in northern Italy.

The spot chosen to coordinate this journal had to be Venice. The three intellectuals who took up Muratori's challenge to form this new cultural community were Scipione Maffei, Antonio Vallisnieri, and Apostolo Zeno. Their new periodical was published quarterly, and appeared regularly for a decade; its reviews showed the maturity and depth of Italian learning, combined with a clear standard of taste. Many of the reviews contain concise summaries of previous approaches to the topic, and the reviewers would assess contributions, criticize and on occasion suggest research projects that should follow from this work. Some of the essays are models of scholarship and are interesting as well. And this may be the first learned journal to include as a regular feature an accurate description of the pagination for each book reviewed. Reviewers generally did their homework; they would regularly attempt to suggest how a new book fitted in with the author's already published works, or related the work to a larger intellectual context. The editor's general introduction to the *Giornale* is a masterful essay describing the history of previous journals and explaining the way scholarly work was organized and promoted in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. It also sketched out the role the journal saw for itself in the development of Italian learning, culture and language. Each issue contained mostly book reviews, though they would also print accounts of experiments, observations, new inscriptions, and letters sent to the editors. The last article in each issue was a summary of the news about other Italian books published in Italy and abroad.

Editors made especial use of their first issue to identify their place on the intellectual map. The first work reviewed was Benedetto Bacchini's masterful edition of the *Liber Pontificalis* of Agnellus of Ravenna, published in Modena in 1708. He had edited the *Giornale* previous to this one, which appeared in the late 1680s and early 1690s. Bacchini's work showed that Italian scholars could match and

even surpass the erudition and technical analysis of the Maurists and the Bollandists in the field of Medieval texts. Bacchini had had serious trouble in getting his book to press because his Medieval author recorded comments hostile to the eighteenth century interpretations of Papal authority, pretensions, and power. Not only did Agnellus describe a period of Ravenna's history when its clergy regarded itself as independent of Rome; but worse than that there was an occasion when an emperor bestowed the pallium on a bishop of Ravenna, a ceremony some deemed the sole prerogative of the Pope. This was not what the Papacy wanted discussed as they attempted to bluff their way between the threats of Austria, France and Spain, and to save something in the dispute over Comacchio. The reviewer did a thorough job describing the contents and considered it of sufficient importance that he continued the review with an article in the second issue.

The second book reviewed was Ludovico Muratori's *Anecdota Greca*; this work followed the two volume *Anecdota Latina* Muratori had written in 1697–98. Both works were collections of texts found in the Ambrosiana Library in Milan; Muratori published them along with critical notes and learned disquisitions on issues deserving more focused treatment. This article was followed by the third review, a new piece by the biologist Antonio Vallisnieri. One of the editors of the journal, Vallisnieri was a student of Malpighi, and an advocate of the experimental methods associated with the Cimento and with Galileo. The implicit point of these three reviews was that Italian scholars had the learning and judgement to take on the scholars of Northern Europe. Italians could compete in the areas of medieval history, Greek antiquities, and contribute important research in the natural sciences on the same level as researchers of northern Europe. Articles Four and Five addressed a more local issue, but one of great significance to Italian intellectual identity. Article Four reviewed books defending the Italian language against the pretensions of the French; and Article Five surveyed a number of collections of Italian poetry, including a review of Acampora's poetry collection.

The editors indicated by the first three articles the specific research areas the journal wished to promote: medieval Italy, early Greek Christian writers, and the life sciences. The other books identified the style of intellectual debate the editors wanted to encourage. Journals North of the Alps used the *Giornale* as a guide for what to review, and sometimes would simply translate and summarize its comments.

Hence we find reviews, or more probably translations from the *Giornale*, of books of Bacchini and Vico, to name just two, in early volumes of the English journal *Memoirs of Literature*. While a deeper study of this first issue would be of interest it strays from the specific concerns of Naples. Besides the Acampora volume which I have already discussed, the *Giornale* reviewed two other books published in Naples: one by Biagio Majoli de Avitabile, the leader of the Neapolitan Arcadia; the other was Giambattista Vico's first published academic prose work, his lecture *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione* (On the Study Methods of our Time). The *Giornale* also included a short announcement of the appearance of Paolo Mattia Doria's first major published work *La vita civile* (The Public Sphere), a work they promised to review later.

The Ethic of Theological Controversy

The *Giornale* editors made clear that they had strong views on how scholarly controversy should be conducted. Authors who ignored their standards could be expected to be crucified in the journal's pages. They chose to tear into Biagio Majoli d'Avitabile's *Lettere apologetiche teologico-morali* (Explanatory- or apologetical-letters concerning moral theology), for just this reason. The work was published in 1709 and listed Avignon as its place of publication. The phrase in the title of moral theology indicated that the work concerned the Jesuit's moral teaching of casuistry. The book was hostile to the Jesuits, but that in itself was insufficient to antagonize the Journal. A number of things about this publication don't add up. The book was dedicated to Emmanuel Mauritz of Lorraine, the Prince of Elbeuf, one of Charles of Hapsburg's favorites. As a sign of his largess and gratitude Charles gave him 5,500 ducats in 1709; that amount of money was the equivalent of the entire academic payroll at the University of Naples, where there were 24 members on the faculty.³ That same year workmen, hired by Elbeuf to find marble that could be ground up for plaster to renovate his palace in Portici, unearthed some remarkable ancient statuary. Ancient Herculaneum had been discovered and the Prince's workers had dug down to what is now called the Villa of

³ Antonio di Vittorio, *Gli Austriaci e il Regno di Napoli, 1707-1734: Le finanze pubbliche* (Napoli: Giannini, 1969), v. 1, 255, 273-4.

the Papyri.⁴ He had the statues removed and sent to decorate his Austrian palace. After this initial looting, there was to be no more exploration until a more systematic investigation began in 1738 under new auspices.

Clearly Elbeuf was a man with money and influence; if he were involved with Majoli d'Avitabile's book why was Avignon chosen as the false place of publication? Given that Charles, Elbeuf's patron, was at war with France and on extremely hostile terms with the Papacy this was a very odd choice indeed. The explanation in the book given by Nicodemo de Galenis is that he just happened to be passing through Avignon. It was well known that the book was actually printed in Naples. This would suggest that either Elbeuf had not agreed to support the publication, or that he wanted to be able to easily disassociate himself from the book. I suspect that Majoli d'Avitabile, who had led the *Arcadia*, had been cut out of the patronage he had been accustomed to receive from the Bourbons. Biagio Majoli d'Avitabile may have been seeking a way to return to favor, and thus hoped to gain it through Elbeuf. The content of the book is an attack on the lax moral teachings of the Jesuits; but what is most interesting is how he attempts to show that his position was shared by most "right-thinking" Neapolitans, many of whom happened to be Arcadians as well.

Why Avignon as a place of publication? I can imagine one plausible explanation. The second part of Majoli d'Avitabile's book was a defense of a book attacking the probabilism of the Jesuits and it was supposedly written by a Franciscan, Bernardino Ciaffoni. The work was first published in 1696, twelve years after Ciaffoni's death. Benedetti attacked it in his 1698 *La scimia di Montalto*; a second edition of Ciaffoni's work was published in 1698 listing Avignon as the place of publication and Pietro Offray as the printer, the same as Majoli d'Avitabile's volume. Both Avignon publications were, in all likelihood, printed in Naples and were part of the Tirso Gonzalez controversy. The Ciaffoni volume went so far as to argue that the Epicureans taught a far more wholesome and moral doctrine than the probabilism of the Jesuits.⁵ The first part of Majoli d'Avitabile's

⁴ An announcement was carried in the *Giornale de'letterati*, (1711), art. 22, v. 5, 399-401.

⁵ Bernardino Ciaffoni, *Apologia in favore de'Santi Padri contro quei che nelle materie morali fanno de'medesimo poca stima* (Avignone: Pietro Offray, 1698), p. 19, 81-83.

book concerned the same issue, the Jesuits' teaching about casuistry. The first letter was in support of Biagio Visconti, a Jesuit who had taught probabilism at the Seminary in Naples but became convinced that the doctrine was in error. He published *Synthesis apologetica theologica moralis* in 1708, using what he called a mathematical method; he was answered by Francolino, another Jesuit.⁶

Majoli d'Avitabile's second letter was part of an ongoing controversy; it also concerned the work of Ciaffoni and defended his book against an attack by Giovanni Sarconio. Sarconio had published this in 1708 in Benevento, and the dedication was dated April 25, 1708; Benevento was a secure and orthodox source for this kind of publication because, though in the heart of the Neapolitan kingdom, it was ruled by Rome. Sarconio took his time, but in November of 1711 he published a refutation of Majoli d'Avitabile, called *Lettere di Ragguaglio* (Letter restoring perspective), published again in Benevento in 1712. In this work Sarconio goes so far to accuse Majoli d'Avitabile of forging Ciaffoni's 1696 text. Ciaffoni's book had been put on the Index in 1701 and rightly so, he claimed. In his view Majoli d'Avitabile was an out and out Jansenist; the Index must have agreed because Majoli d'Avitabile's book was officially condemned in January of 1712. Despite this, Majoli d'Avitabile continued his law career and worked as an anticlerical, anti-Jesuit writer; his later writing concerned local controversies of northern Italy.

So, given this somewhat confusing scenario, why did the *Giornale* give Majoli d'Avitabile a hard time? The journalists seem to have thought something important was at stake. The review describes the contents, and some of the arguments used; the anti-probabilism is not what concerned them. What they faulted him for was his abuse of citations, specifically that he added his own words to his sources but didn't indicate that to his reader. Furthermore, he obfuscated his place of publication, and he printed the letters of his Venetian correspondent, Giannantonio Astori without his permission. The journal accused him of being more interested in his argument than the truth. But these are only small points in comparison to their major concern, which was to make clear that in their view this was no way to handle theological controversy. What they could not say, but clearly foresaw, was that this book was headed for the Index. It was one

⁶ Nicola Badaloni, *Introduzione a G.B. Vico*, p. 326

thing in Church/State conflicts for the Church to use the Index as a weapon. But, theological disputation should be carried out in a rational, disciplined manner; these quarrels had their place, but what ought to be avoided was taking the issue to Rome and the Index for resolution. Theological disputes should be the concern of the community of theologians, not Papal administrators; if the problem was taken to Rome, the decision would have to be absolute and without appeal. The journal hoped to prevent recurrences, even small ones, of the odious and shameful Galileo affair. As the journalists saw it, they believed Rome would allow them an autonomy in specific disciplines, as long as scholars showed themselves deserving of this trust. Such a position was a version of the mutual trust argument we saw developed before.

An interesting aftershock of the Majoli d'Avitabile affair, revealing of the mentality of authors dealing with public peer review, is the reaction of Giangrisostomo Scarfò and the reponse of the *Giornale* to him. Scarfò was an Arcadian and a close friend of Majoli d'Avitabile. He was also a member of the Basilian Order.⁷ He published a letter, *Lettera apologetica* dated Rome, December 17, 1710 under the pseudonym Cristofano Cardiecletti. This unpaginated publication positively raged against the journal accusing it of Machiavellian tricks. Why he was so upset is difficult to fathom. He wasn't mentioned in their review at all; but that may have been the problem, for in his extensive title to this pamphlet he asserts he will also defend Scarfò who was mentioned by Majoli d'Avitabile as having proposed some corrections to the Maurist Fathers' massive edition of the works of St. Augustine. Was Scarfò, then, complaining that he hadn't been mentioned by the review? Scarfò summarized the arguments of Majoli d'Avitabile and defended the position of the Jansenists. He thanked the journal for its generous comments concerning the other Neapolitans, Vico and Doria, but his pseudonym bemoaned the treatment of his friends Majoli d'Avitabile and Scarfò. The *Giornale* reviewed this work in 1712 and they made clear that they knew that the author was Scarfò and made fun of his self-promoting defense. In their essay they had no option but to condemn his Jansenist position and the defense of his friend, now that Majoli d'Avitabile's book was on

⁷ Domenico Zangari, *Un naufrago della gloria: saggio polemico-critico* (Napoli: Morano, 1914); if the birthdate given by Zangari of 1685 is correct, Scarfò wrote his first book at the age of 15.

the Index. As they knew, work was still being done on the Bull *Unigenitus* which was supposed to resolve the Jansenist issue once and for all; rational, public debate on Jansenism was not a possibility in Italy.⁸

This was exactly the kind of impasse, or perhaps resolution, that the *Giornale* hoped to prevent; their dealing with Scarfò's book is very telling about their priorities. First, they repeated the list of those Scarfò cited as supporters of his position; but the *Giornale* explained how each one named, being good Catholics, supported the new orthodoxy being hammered out in Rome. Then they briefly reviewed the history of Jansenism, particularly the crazy controversy concerning the Five Propositions: were they in Jansen's text or not, well of course they were if the Pope said so, so the journal states. I believe it temerity to suggest the reviewers were secretly expressing unorthodox sentiments, but given their principles, they were clearly not indifferent to this outcome. As everyone knew the Jansenist quarrel was particularly the problem of French Catholicism and because of France's inability to resolve the issue, the responsibility for handling it was passed on to the Pope. The *Giornale* could not be open about this failure of the French, nor could they openly state that the Pope should not deal with the issue. What they did instead was point to an error of the French *Journal de Trévoux*, an organ of the Jesuits, which had first made the mistake of praising Scarfò. The Jesuit journal had subsequently retracted their remark.

To summarize, the *Giornale* was not obligated to mention Scarfò's book; and if they did it only to preserve their honor, they could still have defended their reputation by noting that the Index had already spoken; Scarfò's defense of Majoli d'Avitabile was already answered. Instead the editors choose to give out as many facts as they could; facts harmless in themselves but damaging in certain contexts. They listed those whom Scarfò said supported him, but the journal denied his claim. Then it summarized the controversy. Since it would have been impossible to attack the French Jesuits's or Louis XIV's handling of this issue, the *Giornale* pointed to the errors of the *Journal de Trévoux* on the matter of Scarfò. None of this, I should make clear, implied or required a support of Jansenism; the concern for the *Giornale* was to show that this was a wretched way to carry on a theological debate.

⁸ *Giornale de'letterati*, (1712) 12 (art. 13), 519-523.

Scarfò was to go on to a very interesting career; besides the controversy about Majoli d'Avitabile, in 1709 and 1710 he published a number of theological works. In the 1720s he published three volumes of his collected essays which concerned topics in the natural sciences, and historical and antiquarian studies of Roman inscriptions and Christian legends. He wrote a biography of Costantino Grimaldi which he published in early 1727, just a few months after Grimaldi's refutations of Benedetti were put on the Index. In 1737 two of his scientific papers appeared in the prestigious Venetian journal, *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici*.⁹ True to the reputation of the Basilian order, Scarfò remained an independent and creative thinker.

To digress, I have found a curious similarity between Vico's theory of light and magnets and that developed by Scarfò in his scientific works. Vico's theory of physics, if this is not too grandiose a title, are developed, primarily, in his Autobiography. Vico remembered talking to Paolo Mattia Doria at the home of Lucio do Sangro about his speculations on the relations of magnetism and light. He hypothesized a model relating flame, light and magnetism.¹⁰ Magnetism had appeared as a topic in the manuscript dialogue *Giannastasio*. Giannettasio published his own thoughts on magnetism in his 1704 prose dialogue *Ver Herculanum* (Herculaneum Spring). He explains magnetism in Book III, chapter 6, using the vocabulary of spirit and the hypothesis of atoms. Curiously, the following chapter concerns fire and light; though he does not directly relate the two phenomena.¹¹ Scarfò, however, takes that step in a pastoral prose dialogue called *Il Neosofo*; the work was intended to explain complex scientific and philosophic ideas to women. He described light as a cause of motion and as a medium for magnetic force.¹² There are differences between the positions of Vico and Scarfò: Vico seemed most interested

⁹ *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici* (Venezia: Zane, 1737), art. 3.

¹⁰ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche, Vita*, 25–26. Given the intense industry devoted to Vico's sources, and those who borrowed or stole his ideas in the eighteenth century, I am hesitant to claim novelty. But, from what I have seen have, no one has looked at Vico in terms of these sources. I should add that Naples produced some serious works on electricity at the end of the period studied here. In 1747 Naples published an edition of P.J. Windler's *Tentamina de causa electricitatis*; this was followed in 1748–49 by the two volume work of G.M. della Torre, *Scienza della natura*, which among its experiments and observations, contained important work on insulated platforms.

¹¹ Nicola Maria Giannettasio, *Ver Herculanum* (Napoli: Raillard, 1704), 168–9.

¹² Giangrisostomo Scarfò, *Il Neosofo* (Venezia: Bonefacio Viezzero, n.d.), xxiii–xxiv.

in explaining the movement of magnetic needles; Scarfò wanted to describe magnetism itself.¹³

Vico's De nostri temporis

Among the Neapolitan works reviewed by the *Giornale* in its first issue was Vico's *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione* (On the Study Methods of our Time). This work had a number of elements that made it attractive to the reviewers. A reader in 1710 would have a sense that the author, taking a particular, focused topic had been able to comment learnedly on a number of controversies in mathematics and literature, that were related to but not central to his topic. The work seemed informed about the methodological quarrels that interested contemporary readers, but the author kept his distance from radical innovation or reaction. Vico follows the convention of mentioning no living author. Furthermore, Vico's opening lines were just the kind of thing the *Giornale* wanted to see: here was an Italian correcting and improving upon a leading thinker of Northern Europe; in this case, Vico was modifying and completing Bacon's work on the advancement of modern learning. And Vico included a substantial virtuoso essay on the development of Roman law. This was a field in which the *Giornale* was keen to have Italian thinkers regain the dominance they had once held. The conclusion of the book was bound to interest any academic concerned about teaching. Vico forcefully raised the question of the comparative pedagogical value of learning specialized subjects from experts or of pursuing a more wide-ranging curriculum taught by generalists.

Vico was a scholar the *Giornale* was interested in promoting. In their second issue they printed a brief notice of Vico's next work, *De antiquissima italorum sapientia* (On the Ancient Wisdom of the Italians).¹⁴ The journal probably received a copy of Vico's book from its publisher, Felice Mosca, who sent it to the *Giornale* with other works he

¹³ Did Scarfò steal this idea from Vico? If he did, it wasn't noted at the time; though that seemed to be the kind of thing Neapolitan scholars kept their eye out for. Zangari records that in 1737 Volpi accused Scarfò of plagiarizing Martirano's *Coriolano* of 1556 and publishing it as his own.

¹⁴ *Giornale de'letterati*, (1710), v. 2, 495–498 (art. 17). This notice is not included in the recent translation of this work, G. Vico, *On the most ancient wisdom of the Italians*, trans. L.M. Palmer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988).

had published. The editors used this method to market their review; they sent copies of the *Journal* to booksellers who would in turn send them their latest publications. In this way they eliminated problems of individual subscriptions and the expense of buying books in order to review them. This worked well for the booksellers as well; Mosca could make money selling the *Giornale* and he also got some free advertising. Later, in the first issue of 1711 they reviewed *De antiquissima*. Vico published an answer and the editor's reply appeared in volume 8, the last issue of 1711. In 1712 the "quarrel" came to an end. Unlike the business with Scarfò, this, according to the editors was how scholarly debate should be conducted—the argument was conducted in the press and scholars could make their judgement based on the evidence published for all to see.

De nostri had its beginnings as part of the matriculation ceremonies marking the beginning of the new academic year, 1708–09. In Naples, the beginning of the academic year was October 18, the feast of St. Luke. The Viceroy, Cardinal Grimani, was in attendance; Vico knew this in advance and, as he said in his Autobiography, he had the Cardinal in mind in its composition. Unfortunately we do not know what parts of the published text were actually delivered; Vico had the lecture printed with substantial additions about a year later by Mosca. Nevertheless, there are some specifics we can conclude about the spoken performance and the published essay. A great deal has been made out of Vico's negative remarks about Cartesian thought and Descartes' promotion of analysis as the universal method for all sciences. It would not, however, require a rocket scientist let alone a sharp professor of rhetoric to figure out that things French were definitely out of fashion in the Naples of 1708–09. Grimani didn't promote the Cartesians (France) or the Arcadians (Rome) who had supported the Bourbons. It was no accident that the 1710 Naples edition of Galileo appeared under Grimani's regime. Grimani, though a Venetian and anti-Papal, still could have no official connection with the Galileo; its promotion and publication, however, fitted very well with the campaign he was launching against Rome and the ongoing controversy with France.

What did Vico want to communicate to Grimani? What could he offer in the midst of the fierce onslaught being made of the issue of ecclesiastical benefices? Vico does make one explicit recommendation that was directed to the viceroy; at the end of his history of Roman jurisprudence he praised the *Sacro Consiglia di Santa Chiara*

(the Sacred Council of St. Clair—Santa Chiara identifies the meeting place of this tribunal, this was the supreme court of Naples). He wanted Grimani to encourage those councillors who showed a willingness to overturn provisions of Roman law, in a lawsuit, when by disregarding the law, the public good was served. Instead of adhering to the law, they were willing to base their decisions on the facts.¹⁵ Vico recommended that other Neapolitan tribunals adopt such intelligent judicial reasoning.¹⁶ Vico's argument of placing facts and specific cases, above abstract rules was part of a new trend to shy away from universal principles.¹⁷ Vico, in this essay, seemed to be staking out a new legal territory. From this work one might have expected Vico to become one of Naples' leading jurists. That he did not develop in this way, at least in any standard sense, is worthy of note. Instead, Vico seemed to wander aimlessly, until, ten years later, in his work on archaic Roman laws, he developed a general method that could also explain Naples' judicial evolution. In the second edition (1730) of *Scienza Nuova* he understood the *Sacro Consiglia* to be an institution that contains traces of the "heroic" ideology of power.¹⁸ By this time, Vico believed he had found a way to describe legal practice that attended to the specific facts of a law case or intentions of a political institution but was not manipulated by the interests of the parties involved.

Doria's La vita civile (The public sphere)

Doria's first major published work, *La vita civile*, was announced in the inaugural issue of the *Giornale*. It was not reviewed until volume 10, 1712; the review was continued in vol. 13, the first issue of 1713. It is not clear why it took so long for a review to appear. It probably

¹⁵ Michael Mooney, *Vico in the tradition of rhetoric* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 75–78. Mooney relates this principle to Vico's *Institutiones oratoriae*.

¹⁶ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche, De Nostri* chap. 11, p. 841. For a negative view of this tribunal and the jurists serving on it, Paolo Mattia Doria, *Massimo del governo spagnolo a Napoli*, ed. Vittorio Conti (Napoli: Guida, 1973), pp. 84–91.

¹⁷ Raffaele Ajello, "Potere ministeriale e società" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo* (Napoli: Jovene, 1980), p. 463. Ajello is talking of a slightly later period. Vico did not change his mind; *Opere filosofiche, Scienza nuova*, (# 323) (axiom 112), p. 460.

¹⁸ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche, Scienza nuova* (1082), 691. It is interesting to compare Vico's brief reference to Giannone's history of the institution in *Istoria civile*, (Book 26, chap. 4) 5, 125–137. Giannone describes the institution itself, how it

was a practical matter of getting a hold of a copy of a book that had been illegally printed. The title echoed the *Della vita civile* used by the fifteenth century humanist Matteo Palmieri, thus connecting it to a humanist predecessor. Doria's work lacked the demonstrative method of Pufendorf, the fantasy of Fénelon's *Telemachus*, and the passion and heroic vision of Baltasar Gracián. But, in a significant sense it was a tract of its times; it offered a politics of stability that drew its energy from nobles like himself who participated in activities like the academies.

Doria's work put Naples on the intellectual map for many scholars in England, France, the Netherlands and Germany; Montesquieu, to name one, chose to visit Naples in 1728 primarily to talk with him.¹⁹ *La vita civile* made its way North where it was favorably reviewed in 1716 by the *Acta Eruditorum* and Le Clerc's *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne*. The *Bibliothèque* claimed that this was a work that showed that "Italy produced men capable of the most noble and just reflections on political matters"; and they believed Doria's work should be classed with that of Grotius, Hobbes and Pufendorf.²⁰

Who was Doria and what was he doing in Naples and why did he make his career there? As his name suggests, Doria was a scion of the famous Genoese family, his mother was of the equally famous Spinolas. In need of money, he had ended up in Naples in pursuit of an inheritance. Having got the money, at first he occupied himself with the abusive, rowdy behavior indulged in by some of the nobility; he made a name for himself for his lavish expenditure, his whoring and duelling. His grandiose lifestyle calmed down as his money was spent; by 1696 he was writing poems for the health of Charles II and the next year he participated in the *Medina Coeli* volume. He was a major participant in the Academy of *Medina Coeli* and played a significant role in organizing the lectures.²¹ Doria's personal experience made him sensitive to one of the major issues for the eighteenth century: what was to be the role of the aristocracy in

changed over time, and, as one would expect, is particularly interested to explain why the word *Sacro* (Sacred) would be appropriate for an institution of civil government.

¹⁹ Raffaele Ajello, "Potere ministeriale e società al tempo di Giannone: il modello napoletano nella storia del pubblico funzionario" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, ed. Raffaele Ajello (Napoli: Jovene, 1980), 451–456.

²⁰ *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne*, 1714 (art. 2) 54–125.

²¹ BSNP MSS XXI A 7 "Memoria per l'eccellissimo Signor Conte D. Giulio Visconti", ll. 22r–v.

an age of monarchs and bureaucrats? Doria had no delusions about the natural virtue or the commitment to public service of many of his peers. At the same time, he was sensitive to the fear that the political societies of the late seventeenth century were on the edge of destruction. Doria, born in 1667, matured intellectually in Naples, but the decisive shaping political event of his life was perhaps in May of 1684 when the fleet of Louis XIV brutally bombarded Genoa.²²

Doria had the intellectual's gift of identifying the major issues and problems of his age. His solutions tend to be less insightful; after a snappy and bracing introduction his writing is often repetitive. But some of his works spoke to his age in a way that few books did; certainly in our own intellectual communities one can usually point to books that brilliantly state a problem but accomplish little more. And for very difficult, emotionally charged subjects, the clever formulation of the issues can have a therapeutic effect for readers. Paul Hazard called the years of the Wars of the League of Augsburg and of the Spanish Succession (1688–1715) as a time of crisis of European consciousness. It is in this context that we may best understand Doria's accomplishment and popularity as an author. He seemed to ask and answer the questions Europeans needed to know and his conclusions were bracing but salutary. His readers felt challenged by his work and his specific recommendations were so general that a reader could use its ideas as a springboard for their own reflections.

In the early 1690s there was a fear, even an expectation among rulers and intellectuals of a renewal of the popular revolts of the 1640s. It was the received wisdom that the English revolt of 1688–89 was going to set off a new round of civil wars in that country. But it didn't happen. That Europe was more politically stable wasn't clearly understood; nor was it realized that stability had been brought about by a major sea change. There was a lot going on that didn't fit expectations. From an Italian perspective, the success of the Netherlands against Louis XIV was all but incomprehensible. How could this insignificant oligarchy, even combined with England, take on the French? Of Italian oligarchic republics what could be said? Genoa allowed Louis to rain cannon balls on their city; Venice could no

²² Giuseppe Ricuperati, "A proposito di Paolo Mattia Doria", *Rivista storica italiana*, 1979, 91, 261–285.

longer wage an aggressive foreign policy against the Ottomans. Besides the amazing Dutch oligarchs there were the English who seemed ripe for civil war, but they were leading a grand military coalition against Louis. And there was the confusing business with the Stuart monarchy; the French, Tuscany, the Papacy and other allies regarded the House of Stuart as England's legitimate rulers, denying official recognition to the Dutch William, Mary, Anne and the House of Hanover. Could legitimate rule be distinguished from the self-interest of each party?

It must have seemed to Doria that this was an appropriate time to ask fundamental questions about the source of authority, and the relation of political morality to personal morality. In this Doria was following the path already charted out by Jean Barbeyrac in his history of morality which served as a preface to his French translation of Pufendorf, published in Amsterdam in 1706. Barbeyrac's treatise was fundamental to the political thinking of the early eighteenth century. Buddeus' *Historia juris naturalis* (1711) continued this same tradition.²³ As Doria saw it, the political world of the early eighteenth century was that of a cultivated, learned society that was not virtuous and whose politics was based on dirty tricks. Doria, like his age was ambivalent on the politics of Machiavelli; he had disdain for the means but admired the efficiency.²⁴ Also he kept a healthy ambiguity on the issue of who should rule and by what authority; hierarchy seemed as natural as a Stoic notion of universal equality—and Doria will make clear he includes women in this equality. But this kind of equality was not derived or related to political rights. Another advantage of Doria's work in terms of its appeal to the times was the way it avoided the radical language of natural rights; nor did he argue that men were ever in a state of absolute freedom.

Doria conceived of *La vita civile* as having as an appendix *Delle educazione del principe* (Concerning the education of a Prince). Vittorio Conti has made the suggestion that the occasion for this second work was the birth of a son to Philip V in March of 1707.²⁵ It is an interesting speculation, though it lacks corroborative evidence; Doria

²³ Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 174.

²⁴ Vittorio Conti, *Paolo Mattia Doria: Dalla repubblica dei togati alla repubblica dei notabili* (Firenze: Olschki, 1978), 34–35.

²⁵ Vittorio Conti, *Paolo Mattia Doria dalla repubblica dei togati alla repubblica dei notabili* (Florence: Olschki, 1978), p. 16.

did not participate in the Arcadian books praising Philip. And, while it is easy to be deceived on these matters, *Dell'educazione* seems an integral part of the entire work; later, with no young prince calling for training, Doria never dropped it from later editions. Doria was seldom completely satisfied with a work, and their endings often seem incomplete. Somehow he just didn't get his ideas down; instead he will go through them once again trying to really make them complete. He avoids this here; *Dell'educazione* was an excellent way to bring closure to the work, because the subject offered such a clear beginning and end point. *La vita civile* is divided in three parts: the first deals with principles of government; part two details the functions of the various officers of state; the final part concerns the state in action.

It is useful to compare this work with another Doria completed soon after his revision of the second edition of *La vita civile*. This is a manuscript brief of the condition of Naples at this time, now published with the title *Massime del governo spagnolo a Napoli*.²⁶ Doria described in detail what he considered Spanish policy to have accomplished in Naples since Masaniello's Rebellion. In Doria's view the stability was deceptive and concealed the real problems facing Naples. The Spanish, using the principle of "Divide and conquer", had undermined trust and public virtue in Naples. As Doria reflected on this problem further, he gradually came to the conclusion that Europe as a whole had lost its moral integrity. The reason for this, he believed, could be explained by the metaphysical bankruptcy of modern philosophy and mathematics. But this total pessimism was not expressed until the 1730s. These later works were simply too extreme for most of readers who dismissed them as the ideas of a crank.

In 1710, it was clear that Doria believed the supposed stability of Naples was a delusion. His solution was to be found in *La vita civile*.²⁷ Doria mirrored the craving of his age to make moral considerations a part of political discourse; and it is significant in his theoretical framework that he did not use the rhetoric of natural rights. In this

²⁶ Paolo Mattia Doria, *Massime del governo spagnolo a Napoli*, introduction G. Galasso, text trans. and ed. V. Conti (Naples: Guida, 1973). Giuseppe Galasso, "Doria: il governo spagnolo a Napoli e i problemi del Regno" in his *La filosofia in soccorso de' governi: La cultura napoletana del Settecento* (Napoli: Guida, 1989), 193–232.

²⁷ Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), chap. 3, 65–89. Pagden's analysis is concerned with issues of reform and the relation of Doria's work to Genovesi's more lasting accomplishment. My point is to suggest why readers responded so positively to Doria's book.

Doria was part of a new movement to dismantle the revolutionary rhetoric associated with the natural rights theories. Even in its most benign form the natural rights tradition was able to think of people living in a state of complete freedom. The general problem facing political thinkers, according to Doria, was to explain how legitimate authority came into being and by what right it could restrict and channel freedom. The practical consequence of thinking about moral and political problems in terms of natural rights, according to him, was that it promoted self-interest and Machiavellian ambition. Furthermore sovereigns, responding out of fear of this freedom had produced maxims and practices such as the Spanish had used in Naples.

Doria hoped that this kind of thinking would disappear and be replaced by a new spirit based on his philosophy.²⁸ His solution was remarkably simple, in part because Doria didn't appear to realize that his purported solution was in fact a statement of the problem he had not solved. He believed that all the individual had to do was to gain some practice of thinking about things in a metaphysical way. Anyone with the right metaphysical training would then be able to understand every particular. Doria provided the same solution to every problem: the difficulty with algebra was that it didn't lead the mind to metaphysical notions; the problem with Descartes was that his philosophy ignored the realm of metaphysics; Machiavellian politics sought only practical conclusions and did not think through issues in a metaphysical way. What he believed he was offering was a principle he did not regard as necessary of proof, that a metaphysical approach was a moral one. Furthermore he never seemed to question whether our understanding of being, triangles and justice might be different. Doria was a victim of the same kind of trivialization of philosophic thought that he blamed on Modern philosophy.

Doria's first readers weren't worried about the practical problems of applying his thought. Instead they seem to be grateful to him for introducing a method that did not require the kinds of heavy commitments and responsibilities tied to the natural rights theories. Its morality was anti-Machiavellian, though it was quite willing to use and manipulate for the sake of a higher good. The intellectual could

²⁸ Vincenzo Ferrone, "Seneca e Cristo: la 'Respublica christiana' di Paolo Mattia Doria", *Rivista storica italiana*, 1984, 96, 5-68, on Machiavelli and his challenge to Augustinian social thinking, see 17-46.

imagine an enlightened ruler engaging in social engineering without worrying about violating a standard of natural rights. Furthermore the theory allowed one to embrace Stoic principles about the equality of persons but to still recognize and enforce a hierarchical society.

More Morality: The Exemplary Death of Shaftesbury in Naples

The English, in these years, were major promoters of the moral virtues, but few were as bent on being edifying as was Shaftesbury. We are fortunate to have a fairly detailed account of his final year, which he spent in Naples. Anthony Ashley Cooper, known by his title, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, was the student of Locke and an earnest free spirit.²⁹ Scarcely 40, in the summer of 1711 he determined that the only way to preserve his health was to seek the comforts of a city in a warmer climate and Naples was the obvious choice. Before departing England he had seen through the press his three volume *Characteristics*, a work of moral philosophy; he was happy in the modest confidence of its good taste and judgment, and planned to prepare a corrected second edition during his retirement in Naples. Several of his letters are full of detailed instructions to his printer including matters like ornamentation and other aspects of page design.³⁰ This kind of detailed concern for all aspects of printing would customarily have gone on face to face and so it is fortunate to have this kind of record preserved. Shaftesbury had little good to say of Darby, his printer; he regarded him as only interested in cutting costs and corners. Shaftesbury only wanted 800 to 1000 copies of the edition printed; any more would begin to seriously wear the engraved illustrations. By limiting the first printing he could preserve the engravings and use them for another edition without having to pay the cost of redoing them. Based on anecdotal evidence it seems that 800 copies would not be an unusual size for a print run in Naples for a scholarly book. Shaftesbury's number suggests that we might expect

²⁹ John A. Bernstein, "Shaftesbury's Optimism and Eighteenth-Century Social Thought" in *Anticipations of the Enlightenment in England, France, and Germany*, ed. Alan Kors and Paul Korshin (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 86–101.

³⁰ Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of, *The life, unpublished letters and philosophical regimen* ed. Benjamin Rand (NY: Macmillan, 1900), 462–66, 528.

twice as many copies in a typical London press run than one in Naples.

After setting himself up in a suitable palace on the Chiaia, he tried to find the artistic talents he desired. Like many foreigners who take up residence abroad, he first encountered or was befriended by those carpers whose pleasure is to run down their own city. All art was dead, or so he was led to believe. It was true that Charles had persuaded the engraver Antonio Maria De Gennaro to move to Vienna, but there was still the talents of Francesco De Grado and his son Bartolomeo. Naples, too, had its painters, as he was to discover; and he found musicians to play for his family, but he gives no clue to their identity. By March of 1712 he was in contact with the circle associated with Valletta and his library. He had already met Paolo Mattia Doria; in April Doria had sent him a tame deer as a gift, but he was required to return the animal. Shaftesbury was quite impressed with Doria; he praised the Doria family for having an ancestor who had reestablished the laws of Genoa. This lineage, he thought, was the only modern family worthy of being compared to that of Lycurgus.³¹ Shaftesbury spoke French, or perhaps Italian or Latin with Doria, Valletta, and their associates. We know his dealings with the painter Paolo De Matteis were carried on in French. De Matteis had worked in France from 1702–5, and certainly knew the language.³²

Shaftesbury had sought out De Matteis because he was seeking a painter to do a specific commission showing Hercules at the crossroad making his choice between Virtue and Vice.³³ Given De Matteis' training with Cornelio and Di Capua, his friendship with classicists like Matteo Egizio and other Arcadians, he was perhaps the painter best suited to deal with Shaftesbury's classical aesthetic of refined Stoicism. And, apparently he didn't mind having a patron imposing a well defined program on his work; Solimena, it appears, was not as amenable to Shaftesbury's requirements. Being a Stoic in the early

³¹ Robert Voitle, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: 1671–1713* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 394; Shaftesbury, *Life, Letters and Philosophical Regimen*, p. 497.

³² Paola Santucci, "De Matteis, Paolo" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 38, 609–613.

³³ Ferdinando Bologna, "La dimensione europea della cultura artistica napoletana" in *Arti e civiltà del Settecento a Napoli* (Bari: Laterza, 1982), p. 58; he explains why he believes Solimena didn't take the job—and he considers this work of De Matteis to be his worst piece.

eighteenth century was clearly a lot of work; the moral character of any significant activity had to be fully considered. To explain to De Matteis what he wanted he wrote in French a work he would subsequently translate into English with the title *The Judgement of Hercules*.³⁴ An engraving of De Matteis' painting acts as a preface to the work. Shaftesbury goes on with a lengthy discourse on the theme given to the painter. He details the various moments that could have been chosen for representation and explained, given the one that was chosen, what each figure had to be doing. The one chosen for this representation was the exact moment when Hercules began an interior dialogue with himself and thus setting himself down the path to critical thinking. As always with Shaftesbury his metaphors are most enlightening. He compares a successful painting to a piece of music, and he has something like the *da capo* form in mind in his description of how a piece ends in the same key in which it began; a successful painting was like a musical number where the whole composition is a clear unity. And beyond this Shaftesbury explains how he thinks a painter should use color and design; there should be nothing exaggerated or grotesque. Works that reject these values he stigmatized as examples of "luxury and libertinism" and "effeminate".³⁵

His critical language is similar to that used by the art historian De Dominici, and, for that matter, to Doria's description of human understanding. Shaftesbury mixed rationalism, sentiment, with high-mindedness; but he also believed the viewer would suffer confusion if the elements of the picture were not properly subordinated. Such experiences were intolerable "to any judicious eye".³⁶ He repeated the belief of the Arcadians or at least of Gravina that artistic expressions directly shape or reflect political values. He exemplified an uneasy tension between his inclination towards equality and his reliance on hierarchy. In *The Letter on Design*, Shaftesbury develops his belief that the judgment of new works of art prepares a people to make

³⁴ The work first appeared in the November 1712 edition of the *Journal des Sçavans*; it is a telling comment on the freedom of academic exchange at that time to remember that England, Austria (hence Naples) were still at war with France and Spain. The English translation appeared at the end of the 1714, 2nd edition of *Characteristicks*. Subsequently it has sometimes been included in editions of this work. The full English title is *A notion of the historical draught or tablature of the judgement of Hercules, according to Prodicus, Lib. II, Xen. de. Mem. Soc. With a letter concerning design.*

³⁵ Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of, *Characteristicks* (London, 1737), 3, 390, 374.

³⁶ Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 3, 373.

informed political decisions. Shaftesbury, who derived such pleasure from allegorical representations, perhaps delighted in the coincidence that a vessel named the *Liberty* carried the De Matteis Hercules to England.

De Matteis and Shaftesbury enjoyed their shared enterprise enough that in January, 1713, Shaftesbury commissioned him to do another work; this time the central subject was to be Shaftesbury, the dying philosopher. The painting was to have shown a view overlooking the Bay of Naples; the philosopher's secretary was there as if taking dictation of the philosopher's last words. A copy of the *Hercules* book was at hand and the painting was to be on an easel: the image and the verbal representations of the philosopher's thought. Shaftesbury was to be painted in the act of recognizing the arrival of a familiar, Death. From Shaftesbury's instructions, again written in French to De Matteis, it might be inferred a drawing was made, but it has not survived and no such painting is known to exist. J.E. Sweetman suggests that the work would have evoked "remoteness yet intimacy".³⁷ Shaftesbury died early in 1713.

At this same time, perhaps around Christmas of 1712, De Matteis painted a wonderfully intimate *Adoration of the Shepherds* for Aurora Sanseverino, a poet and member of the Neapolitan Arcadia. The Mother and Child are surrounded by worshiping shepherds, a putto, an attentive Joseph, donkey and cow. The detail and expression given to the shepherds may reflect on her poetic interests. Here the moral values of the painting are the purity and integrity of the genuinely simple. In contrast to this Arcadian simplicity, sometime in 1714, De Matteis painted a *Self-portrait Painting the Peace of Rastatt*—one of the treaties concluding the War of the Spanish Succession. Here, instead of the Philosopher's secretary taking dictation and the painting in the background, we see the painter himself at work and his painting is at the center. Despite the presence of the self-portrait the work at first seems the opposite of the personal for the canvas is jammed full with allegorical and mythological figures. In one corner a lion lies down with a lamb while Peace chases away War; up above a Papal figure rides on the clouds displaying the Eucharist; Plenty bears fruit, and on the bottom right behind the painter is a dead soldier,

³⁷ J.E. Sweetman, "Shaftesbury's Last Commission", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1956, 19, 110–116. Sweetman seems to have completely explained the intended "history" for this painting.

a pistol and dagger are near him. Putti engage in useful works like supporting the canvas for the painter; others use the clouds for some fun, like going sliding. De Matteis is represented putting the finishing touches to a painting of two women: allegorical figures of France and the Empire. Behind the painter sits a monkey. And if De Dominici is to be believed, this was not merely the traditional symbol of art aping nature, but also a recognition that De Matteis had simian-like features.³⁸ According to De Dominici this painting was not a success and popular reaction was generally negative. Indeed, De Dominici faults the picture, considering it vulgar that De Matteis put his self-portrait in the center of what should have been a celebration of the public joy for the arrival of peace.

Evonne Levy has argued that this view does not take into account or recognize the different homages to Giordano, Velázquez and Rubens contained in these iconographical allusions.³⁹ This interpretation may suggest a precedent for the kind of use Vico was to make of his “four authors” (Plato, Tacitus, Bacon and Grotius) in his Autobiography. Vico used these authors to give a temporal order to his intellectual development; each one of them represented a new direction in his thought and work. In Vico’s account of his life each author presides over a portion of his growth as a scholar. Their influence is more like one of Vico’s imaginative universals than as a source for specific doctrines. Following Levy’s suggestion one could think of the De Matteis self-portrait as relying on such imaginative universals as part of his autobiographical statement. Like Vico, De Matteis identifies his predecessors through symbolic representation rather than direct quotation. And, in a self-portrait rather than an autobiography, De Matteis placed himself in the center of this very painterly collection of icons which composed his historical world and artistic tradition. De Matteis may be seen as claiming that historical events may not only be represented through the eye of the artist but also through the artist’s consciousness as well. His culture had granted such a privilege to the work of poets but had yet to acknowledge it for the painter or musician. Given De Matteis’ feisty temperament and his clear sense of his own virtuosity it would not be unlikely to also read in this work a critique of the kind of reduction of the art of painting implicit in theories like those of Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury

³⁸ De Dominici, *Vite de’ pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletane*, 3, 538.

³⁹ Evonne Levy, “Paolo de Matteis, 1662–1728” in *A Taste for Angels*, 237–242.

seemed to regard painters as not much different than his printer whose art was to be used illustrate the theories of a patron rather than represent the ideas of the artist. De Matteis seems to be illustrating that he too can be independent of the political and ideological programs worked out for him by his patrons. But De Matteis was following and illustrating Shaftesbury's belief that taste was shaped by cultural and psychological preconceptions. The *Peace of Rastatt* picture is a tantalizingly ambiguous statement of the role and identity of the artist. De Matteis, in this series of works, shows the different ways in which an artist might be involved in the popularization of ideas and the teaching of values.

CHAPTER NINE

VICO'S FIRST PUBLISHED SCHOLARLY WORKS AND HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH DORIA

Vico's Latin prose works, *De nostri* and *De antiquissima*, while in some respects very different have frequently been regarded as a unit. To these should be added the reviews and Vico's replies which appeared in the *Giornale* of 1711. Vico described *De nostri* as a kind of preface to *De antiquissima*. These works are of particular importance for those interested in Vico's philosophy because it is in these two works that he first stated and investigated the *verum/factum* principle, that is, we can only be said to know something if we have made it. This principle has been regarded by many as the philosophic core of Vico's *Scienza Nuova*, hence its special significance. Furthermore, both of these works are critical of certain aspects of Descartes' philosophy. Vico's reputation as a philosopher is related to his critique of Descartes' *Meditations*, and especially of Descartes' arguments about the certainty of the *cogito*.

An Excursus on Making and Knowing

The primary motive for contemporary scholarly interest in *De nostri* and *De antiquissima* concerns Vico's *verum/factum* principle; that is, we only know the things we have made. In terms of Vico's significant works this runic expression is taken to mean that we have a special ability to understand history, and the human sciences in general, because of the fact that we, as human beings, have made or done these things ourselves.

Given the centrality of this idea for most interpretators of Vico's thought it is not surprising that it has been closely examined and origins for it have been widely explored. Some see this idea as a kind of master key to Vico's mature thought; some give it a parallel status to Descartes' *cogito* and make it an axiom for his science; others find in it Vico's discovery of a particular and new kind of knowledge, a kind of understanding that only comes from an insider's

experience. And it has been argued by others that the statement was little more than common sense; and some Vico scholars will deny it has any serious significance for the *Scienza nuova*.¹

The idea that there is a special relationship between being able to make something and therefore having access and knowledge about that thing is old indeed. Plato was able to make a burlesque of this notion in the *Ion*; Socrates used the idea to lead on and then hopelessly confuse the vain and not very metaphysically astute rhapsode. Ion was persuaded that Homer, because he made his poems knew all the arts and crafts contained within them. To be sure Vico makes a more focused use of this conception of truth. In *De nostri*, his first presentation of the idea, his central example was a geometric proof. This was not exactly a new approach in mathematics. To mention one example, in Euclidian geometry when the proof was to construct some figure, the final statement after repeating the enunciation was not QED (That which was to be demonstrated), but QEF (That which was to be made). An immense amount of research has been done in the effort to find an origin for Vico's *verum/factum* principle. Many possible sources have been proposed and several come from other writers in the seventeenth century. This might suggest that the idea was not "merely in the air" but an accepted part of the philosophic vocabulary of the day. The reviewers of the *Giornale*, however, seem to me to provide evidence that questions this attempt to deny any originality to Vico here. They asked Vico to provide a sound, well-argued justification for his *verum/factum* principle; in their view the principle was not self-evident, it needed explanation. To them,

¹ The bibliography on this topic is mammoth. This issue is central to the arguments of Pompa's *Vico*, Verene's *Vico's Science of Imagination*, and Berlin's *Vico and Herder*; in different ways they explicate this principle in some detail. Bedani's *Vico Revisited*, especially chapter 14 attempts to debunk the principle. Bedani is continuing an argument begun by Hayden White's review essay of Pompa's *Vico in History and Theory*, (1976), v. 15, 196–7. Bedani, though, seems to discount White's approach, for does not cite this work, or indeed any of White's work on Vico. Michael Mooney, *Vico in the tradition of rhetoric*, p. 85, also makes an argument that this principle is not central to Vico's thought; his emphasis is on Vico and his rhetorical theories. Pompa and Verene discuss White, however. From a different perspective see, Antonio Pérez-Ramos, *Francis Bacon's idea of science and the maker's knowledge tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 189–196. Lucia Palmer's "Introduction" and Bibliography to her translation of Vico's *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988) contributes to this continuing debate and provides a useful summary of aspects of it—she too does not mention White. Her summary of the scholarship that accepts the *verum/factum* principle as central to Vico's accomplishment is informative and balanced.

the concept wasn't so common as not to arouse notice. And, if anything, they were better read than Vico in philosophy. That they did not attribute this principle to another source suggests that they didn't know one. Given this I would say it seems extremely unlikely that we will ever find a convincing textual source for Vico's *verum/factum* principle.

It is only, therefore, with trepidation that I now propose to add to the list of "significant" potential sources. There are two striking uses of the *verum/factum* principle in the New Testament and both are attributed to the Apostle John. The first is in the Gospel of John, chapter 3, verse 21, (*qui autem facit veritatem*, the one who makes the truth); the second passage presents the principle in the negative in John's First Epistle, chapter 1, verse 7 (*et veritatem non facimus*, and we do not make the truth).² The Gospel passage comes at the conclusion of the well known conversation between Christ and Nicodemus; the Epistle passage follows the introduction, the author is beginning to discuss the idea of God as light. The text continues, that if we say there is darkness for those living with God, we lie and "do not make the truth". There are many Biblical commentaries on these two works that reflect on these passages, and a few even mention the relation of making and knowing. The one most relevant to Vico's principle was written by Daniel Heinsius. Heinsius, it has been argued, was the primary editor of the Elzevier Greek edition of the New Testament, which remained the standard edition through the nineteenth century.³ The relevant Heinsius commentary on Vico's principle can be found in his famous edition of Nonnus' *Paraphrasis in Joannem* (Paraphrase of the Gospel of St. John). First published in 1627, it was the first critical edition of the work of this Father of the Church. Nonnus, according to tradition was a pagan who converted to Christianity. Before conversion he was thought to have written an epic poem on Dionysius' triumphal visit to India. His exposition and florid amplification of John's text was seen to have the same stylistic virtues as his poetry.

To his edition of Nonnus John Heinsius appended a series of essays. Chapter 10 is of special relevance to Vico, for here Heinsius

² In both cases Jerome has literally translated the Greek *poieion* and *alatheia*. For enlightenment on this issue see, James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine "Confessions" Introduction and text* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992), 1, 1.

³ H.J. de Jonge, *Daniel Heinsius and the Textus Receptus of the New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1971).

discusses the linking of making and knowing found in John's text. The excursus is a particularly rich one which starts with an enunciation of the now familiar distinction between the signifier and the signified, (and the distinction made in Latin between *langue* and *parole*) leading to a discussion on ambiguity and myth. Of specific concern here is his analysis of the Greek word truth, *alatheia*. He observed that the conceptual linking of the verb *poiein*, "to make", with "truth" would not have been intelligible to Plato or Aristotle, let alone Homer. He also asserts that this concept was foreign to Hebrew and Chaldean usage as well.⁴ Heinsius seems to indicate that John and the early Christians, developed a new kind of metaphysics, one not known to the pagan Greeks or Hebrews. At least, that is how I imagine Vico would have interpreted this passage. But did Vico read Heinsius? Nicolini suggests Vico knew Heinsius' commentary on Horace; he speculates he knew Nonnus' work on Dionysius, the *Dionysiaca*.⁵ The 1610 edition of the *Dionysiaca*, the best available, was edited by Heinsius and Scaliger. But the Heinsius 1627 Nonnus was put on the Index in 1632. This was despite the fact that Pope Urban VIII invited him to Rome. We can not expect Vico, who played by the rules in these matters, to quote a condemned author.

Vico may have derived some inner satisfaction by realizing that his philosophical principle had firm grounding in the Gospel and Epistles of John. Nevertheless, the specialness Heinsius implied about John's philosophical statement about making the truth ran counter to the way Vico wanted to use it in *De Antiquissima* and *Scienza Nuova*. In *De antiquissima* he argued that this metaphysical claim was known to the early founders of the Latin language; in *Scienza nuova*, he used the principle to explain that history was a science, and that scholars can have real knowledge about gentile history because human beings make their own history. Both conclusions were contrary to Heinsius' analysis. Vico, reading Heinsius, might well conclude that the *verum/factum* principle was the key to John's new Christian metaphysics; but such an interpretation would suggest a more universal application of his science than Vico intended. While we don't know if Vico read Heinsius, given his sharp eye for details that interested him I see no

⁴ Nonnus, *Paraphrasis in Joannem*, Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Greek, vol. 43 (Turnhout: Brepols), 43, 1041–1042 (218–219).

⁵ Fausto Nicolini, *Commento storico alla seconda "Scienza nuova"* (Roma: "Storia e Letteratura", 1948), # 856, # 543.

reason to doubt Vico knew of the Bible passages from John. And it would be no surprise that Vico did not point them out. The one thing Italian scholars had learned from the Galileo trial was the value of claiming to keep disciplines separate, and to affirm their autonomy. Scripture might safely be used to confirm or deny a matter of fact, but the author who sought to justify a philosophical innovation by Scripture took a risk.

De antiquissima in Context

Vico dedicated *De antiquissima* to Doria, the man who had suddenly become the recognized leader of the Neapolitan intellectual world. Besides Doria, Vico gave special recognition to Ariani, Cristofaro, and Galizia who belonged to the atomist group at Naples; they were quasi-materialists and followed a revised form of Epicureanism. Vico, in his dedicatory statement, indicated by this choice of patrons and sponsors that his aim was to reconcile the two main groups in Naples' intellectual world. This attempt was not to be successful in the fractious, rambunctious intellectual community of Naples. For Vico, a shifting tension between Epicurus and Plato remained evident in each version of the *Scienza nuova*. To the *Giornale* reviewers, *De antiquissima* occupied a shadowy region between antiquarian studies of ancient inscriptions and other artifacts, and projects of the imagination like the Arcadia.

The problem that Vico set out to solve in *De antiquissima* was to explain why the Latin language seemed so packed with philosophic locutions, although it was known that the ancient Romans had no interest in philosophy. Vico's answer was that they must have borrowed their language from a more philosophic people. The only two options were the Ionians who founded colonies in southern Italy and Sicily, the region known as Magna Graecia, and the Etruscans, who were thought responsible for teaching ancient Rome complex religious ceremonies. The Ionians spoke Greek; the Etruscan language had not been deciphered in the eighteenth century, despite the assertions to the contrary made by zealous scholars who shared in the communal delusion or hallucination that they could read Etruscan. They filled books with their fantasy and believed they were arguing about the fine points of the Etruscan language. This "Etruscomania", as it is called, remains a permanent testimony to the power of the

imagination to override evidence and the less praise-worthy character trait of scholars who can not admit that they do not understand something.⁶ The Greeks and the Etruscans were the two sources for Vico's ancient Italian wisdom, but as it became clear in his second response to the *Giornale*, Vico had his own theory about archaic Italy. He maintained that Magna Graecia had been a center of learning before Pythagoras arrived. It was the high culture of the inhabitants of Croton that persuaded Pythagoras to settle there. But the wisdom Pythagoras found in Croton was not a local product; it had been borrowed from the Etruscans. And, Etruscan civilization, Vico believed, antedated the Greeks; and, its origins, he speculated, derived from an Egyptian colony established in Tuscany. Tuscan sophistication was linked to Egyptian esoteric wisdom.

Vico added another significant element to his account. Instead of focusing on Pythagoras and atomism as had Valletta's history, he emphasized the metaphysical points of Zeno, the student of Parmenides who lived at Elea in the Cilento. Vico continued the idea that atomism was a distinctive characteristic of Magna Graecia; but instead of materialistic atoms Vico proposed spiritual ones. It is generally acknowledged that Vico, like his contemporaries, made an error about Zeno and confused or intermingled the views of Zeno of Elea and Zeno of Citium. Bernardo De Rojas, in his 1694 work which was overshadowed by that of Benedetti, was interested in refuting the atomism and the points of Zeno. It might be possible, in this regard, to describe D'Andrea and Valletta as defending Pythagoras' atomism against Benedetti, and that Vico was answering De Rojas' critique of Zeno's theory of metaphysical points.

Nowadays most readers of *De antiquissima* approach it with a couple of questions in mind. Some want to trace back ideas from Vico's later works searching for their earlier formulations. Afterall, Vico was 42 when he wrote this, and one would think it the product of a mature mind. The other main line of inquiry are those who want to understand his arguments against Descartes. Part of the reason for the contemporary emphasis on this book is that unlike most of Vico's prose, *De antiquissima* actually presents arguments in the form we are accustomed to sink our teeth in. Such readings of Vico, though, are different from that of his contemporaries. We are fortunate to possess

⁶ On the early history of this movement see, Giovanni Cipriani, *Il mito etrusco nel rinascimento fiorentino* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1980).

two substantial reviews by the *Giornale*, and opinions of this work can also be inferred from some Neapolitans. There was, I believe, a significant exchange between Vico and Doria concerning the ideas proposed in *De antiquissima*.

What kind of reader was Vico trying to reach and of what was he trying to persuade them? No one, I think, could take his book as a serious contribution to the origins of Latin—there is just too much the air of a party game about it. But there was more to the work than a clever verbal *tour de force*. Later, in his Autobiography, Vico was to look back on it and see it as pointing to his new understanding of the origins of poetry. But in 1710 this was not on Vico's mind. When he published this as Book I, did he really intend on completing the other two books? While Book II on physics seemed to have existed in some form, the last book on morality has left no trace at all. It would seem Vico had made his point with Book I and had no reason to go on with the project.

In *De nostri* he praised those jurists who pursued the public good by finding a middle ground between adhering to the letter of the law and the promptings of self-interest, here he advocates the employment of a variety of methods. The thinker should yield neither to the authority of others or the subjectivity of the individual's inner light. Vico believed that the application of a variety of methods based on a clear understanding of what really constituted demonstration could refute the sceptics and those who supported probabilism. These themes of probabilism and natural light repeated and restated issues from the Grimaldi/Benedetti controversy. But Vico, after writing this book and the two defenses, put it on the shelf. He would return to these problems in a new form in the 1720s.

Vico's anti-Cartesianism

The idea that Descartes and Vico can be used to symbolize the polar oppositions of modern thought would have come as a surprise to Vico's contemporaries. Today the views of Descartes and Vico have been taken to represent the split between the sciences and the humanities, reason and the imagination, objectivity and subjectivity, logic and rhetoric, the symbols of mathematical physics and words of human language, and the list could go on. The reason for our greater sensitivity to Vico's anti-Cartesianism comes in part from our living in

a world dominated by Descartes' thought; in 1710 Descartes' approach was one of several competing systems. In Vico's time an opponent to Descartes looked like Benedetti. The *Giornale* notes Vico's disagreements with Descartes, but this did not make him a supporter of Aristotle. Vico's attack was nothing in comparison to Benedetti's attempt to destroy Descartes' system. Later, in the 1720s Doria became an impassioned opponent of Descartes, Locke and the whole Modern project; Vico did not follow Doria in this. The *Giornale* in 1711 tacitly notes that despite his opposition to Descartes, Vico supported the Cartesian denial of consciousness to animals. Vico declined to explain how he reconciled this with his criticisms of the *cogito*. Vico makes clear at the end of his Second Reply that he was in basic agreement with the Cartesians he knew.

The *Giornale* noted that Vico took away consciousness from animals. Neapolitans might well have given this some thought as well. Using the philosophical symbolism taken from the *Giannastasio* this would mean an implicit criticism of the "Pythagoreans" and Jesuits like Benedetti who argued that animals had temporary, mortal souls. And, for those who attended the Medina Coeli, Vico's comments on fate would have reminded them of Lucina's lectures on Assyrian religion. Vico's Italians and Lucina's Assyrians believed that an eternal order of unchanging causes and unalterable outcomes controlled individual and national destinies. According to Lucina the Assyrians did not despair from such a grim world view; instead they put their energies to studying the movements of the stars and planets in order to better read god's will. Vico doesn't make clear how the creators of Latin dealt with this prospect. Vico concludes this book with a penultimate chapter on Fate and the last on fortune, claiming that Fortune was Queen of the World. In the famous engraving for *Scienza nuova*, Lady Metaphysics stands on a globe just as Fortune did in Cebes' famous allegory to which Vico alludes. But, unlike the *Scienza nuova* where selfish behavior turned out to be for the good of all, here God, acting as fortune, overpowered the interests of individuals for the good of the whole.

In the end the *Giornale* had to say what it thought, so in their second and final review they tell Vico that they know he can't really be serious about this project. After all, they said, the kind of etymologies he was attempting were fraught with difficulty. The way to do this kind of research was to spend time unearthing the oldest written examples or monuments of these cultures. Though not

mentioned, the model they have in mind was that of Mabillon and Montfaucon as well as Italy's Francesco Bianchini. Francesco Bianchini, in 1697, had published *La storia universale provata con monumenti e figurata con simboli degli antichi* (Universal History proved with monuments and engraved with symbols of the ancients), which followed the guidelines recommended by the *Giornale*. The heart of Bianchini's book were his interpretations of visual evidence taken from ancient coins, medals, figures on tombs and other chance discoveries. If Bianchini wanted to make a significant argument on linguistic evidence, he attempted to trace the word back to Hebrew. Bianchini was not interested in the way a language concealed concepts or ideas; what concerned him was the way that cultural artifacts contained the history of their own invention. He was more interested in the tools and material accomplishment of a culture than its mental framework. Bianchini had studied with Malpighi in Bologna and knew the methods of the Maurists. He had come to Naples in 1702 as the Papal Legate accompanying Philip V on his visit to Naples. Later, in 1714 in Rome he would be an important popularizer of Newton's ideas. In the *Istoria universale* he saw himself as using the method of Mabillon, and in the spirit of Galileo doing experiments with his evidence.

Bianchini's work sums up the method and approach Vico's *Scienza nuova* was written against. Even in *De antiquissima* certain elements of Vico's later theories come into clear focus. In contrast to Bianchini, Vico had a fundamental trust in language and written texts. Unlike most of his contemporaries Vico didn't even try his hand at interpreting ancient inscriptions. For Vico, words, especially their casual usage, were revealing of the most important insights. Visual evidence on the other hand, the interpretation of vases, and other images, the heart of Bianchini's research was avoided by Vico. Vico was personally interested in the visual arts, but they do not figure prominently in the evidence presented in *Scienza nuova*. Even the famous engraving of the 1744 edition is an illustration of his theory; it is not the representation of an idea.

Another significant development evident in *De antiquissima* was Vico's willingness to use the voice of the common man, the man in the streets, to provide significant data for his theories. *De antiquissima* at the very beginning cites the kind of speech he said one could hear in Naples' Via Toledo or the Roman Forum of Hadrian's time. He used the speech of slaves spoken in the plays of Plautus and Terence to mock at the way some Cartesians must have talked about the

Master's words. *Scienza nuova* is famous for arguing that significant political change does not come from the top down but must be a popular movement. Vico rejected, in part, the two tier structure of an elite which manufactured beliefs for the people as a model for culture. Instead of popular culture being a degenerate form or derivative from a learned culture, he believed these different cultures to be in an aggressive tension with each other. The notion that tension could be creative comes from the *Scienza nuova*; in *De antiquissima* he still held the belief that wise leaders could create a people's language and culture. Slaves and common people will unconsciously pick up and use the philosophic language of the elite. There is balance and albeit dumb trust between the founders of the language and its speakers. In *De antiquissima* Vico repeated the general view of his culture that all languages enclosed another hidden language; in *Scienza nuova* his method is simply to transcribe what is there for all to see without the addition of an esoteric wisdom.

Making and Knowing for Vico and Doria

It is possible that some of Vico's Neapolitan readers would hear echoes of Benedetti when he noted that the *cogito* did not create a scientific certainty but only a feeling of consciousness. But while Benedetti went on to say Descartes was too subjective, Vico seemed to suggest that Descartes didn't go far enough. The sceptic, according to Vico, could legitimately claim that Descartes hadn't explained by what causes they could know that their awareness of existence was true. The only way to deal with the sceptic was to trick them in to accepting the *verum/factum* principle. If I follow his argument, in part it seems that while sceptics claim to be aware of particulars, they don't know genera; hence they will not take the step from being conscious of something to say they know its causes. But anyone who does a proper demonstration has to use genus and species. Once the sceptic understood what was involved in demonstrations, the reasons for their doubt would be gone.⁷ And Vico hoped that demonstration could be restored

⁷ Giambattista Vico, *Vico: selected writings*, ed. and trans. Leon Pompa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 59. Pompa provides a broader analysis of this confusing passage.

to its original significance making demonstration the equivalent of knowledge.

Vico wasn't alone in his interest in demonstration; Lucantonio Porzio, whom Vico called "the last Italian philosopher of the school of Galileo" was in frequent conversation with him at this time, and had written on this subject in his *Dissertationes logicae*. His description of proof was a fairly standard one and followed Descartes' rules of reason. One can imagine Vico, with his mind attuned to *facere*, to have taken it as confirmation of his views when Porzio spoke of a demonstration as *factum*, and he noted that axioms were to be accepted on faith, *ex se fidem faciunt*.⁸ Vico's notion of a demonstration was mechanical even concrete; he seemed to think that listing or assembling the steps one after another would result in a convincing demonstration. This lends creditability to the claim in his autobiography that he once attempted Euclid but got no further than proposition five of Book I.

We don't know what Porzio made of Vico's enthusiasm for demonstration and his principle of making the truth, but Vico's friend Doria seems to have given the matter a lot of thought. At this time Vico and Doria shared a number of common interests and aspirations; both were capable of grand conceptions and saw themselves involved with the big ideas. Modern culture was in a condition of crisis and they believed they had a way to get things back on track. They agreed that if Europeans would just really think about how they did mathematics, then clear thinking, decent government, and good behavior would return to public and private life. Interest in Euclid's geometry was widespread at this time; the most innovative contribution proved to be that of Gerolamo Saccheri, a Jesuit teaching in Pavia, whose famous quadrilateral was to have an important role in non-Euclidean geometry. Unlike Vico, Doria studied his Euclid and became a competent mathematician. With all the enthusiasm and impatience of the annoyingly intelligent outsider, Doria sought

⁸ Lucantonio Porzio, *Opera omnia* 2 vols. (Naples: Mosca, 1736), 1, 378. It is perhaps worth citing the Porzio passage in its entirety: "Quod ubi semel factum, constantes esse in assumpto principio, ad ea, quae ab illo riti consequuntur diligenter inspicere debemus. Quae ratione etiamsi plures philosopharentur, eadem tamen semper essent omnium inventiones, eadem conclusiones: vix forte mutato ordine. Quae demonstrationes ab aliis dependent, et illae ab aliis, donec perducamur ad prima matheseos principia, quae cunctis hominibus aequae sunt manifeste, et ut sunt undemonstrabilia, ita quoque demonstratione non indigent, quoniam ex se fidem faciunt."

to impress his vision on insouciant academics. He developed and refined his position so that he gradually came to the conclusion that appears bizarre when baldly stated: that algebra was morally suspect.⁹ Vico left aside the geometric model as his leading example of the connection between making and knowing. Vico kept the principle but ceased to use geometry as the example. Doria, on the other hand, pursued the idea of a geometric model with continued intensity.

Doria took up the study of geometry and devoted a number of years to mastering Euclid. He was not especially gifted in this field, and it seems he had to work to gain the level of competence he attained. Vico imagined doing a proof involved making a step, knowing the reason for it and then going on to the next step. Doria, however, had had the experience of the mathematically inept of knowing the steps and the reasons for an entire proof but still not being able to grasp what the entire proof was about. In such a case he knew you could "make", that is demonstrate a proof, but not understand it. Instead of "making" Doria preferred the language of invention. He believed that mastery of a proof came when you found the one idea that tied a proof together. As Doria seemed to know from his own experience, you don't really make a proof your own until you grasp the inevitability of the argument and the absolute rightness of each step. The knowledge of its truth was not in the process itself, as Vico had argued, but in the recognition of the proof's inherent unity.

Unity of a proof was in his mind just a short step away from Platonic metaphysics. For Doria the thing that really excited him about geometry was the way its demonstrations raised metaphysical questions. Euclid always moved from the less to the more abstract; his masterpiece was Book X which concerned the relation of the rational and irrational numbers. All this was ruined by algebra according to Doria; algebra from the very first required students to use abstract symbols for unknowns. The student used abstract symbols but was not supposed to think of what they meant. They were tools for problem solving, but they had no higher function. Algebraic symbols represented incommensurable magnitudes like π and the radius of a circle, or a side of a square and its diagonal. Furthermore algebra eliminated the need for diagrams and all the useful mental skills the young mind gained by studying drawings. One can follow the

⁹ David Lachterman, "Vico, Doria e la geometria sintetica", *Bollettino del centro di studi vichiani* (1980), 10, 10–35.

transition of Doria's rejection of modern mathematics in the changing educational program outlined in the different editions of the *Della Educazione del Principe* section of *La vita civile*. The 1710 edition repeats some of Vico's statements against analytic geometry voiced in *De nostri studi*, but it is all low key and he is willing to accept Descartes' work on metaphysics. The fifth edition of 1753 is full of strident invective against Descartes and the algebraic method.¹⁰

Doria mistook his own passionate concern for the philosophical significance of mathematics as an indication of his having genuine original insight in the field. This grandiosity resulted in the unfortunate publication in 1717 of proofs purporting to square the circle and to trisect an angle. These two problems had the reputation of being insoluble. When Doria refused to recognize the paralogisms of his argument after they had been clearly pointed out, his mathematical reputation suffered greatly. It must have been easy to make fun of pompous Doria, but he was not alone in his folly. A watchmaker in Reims, Remi Baudemont, claimed to have squared the circle in 1712 and printed his results. If the imprint is to be trusted a Latin edition was also published in Prague. Baudemont's proofs fared no better than Doria's, and, though I don't know, I presume after the excitement he went back to making watches.

Doria and the Controversy with Porzio

In volume 9 of the *Giornale*, the first issue of 1712, Doria's *Considerazioni sopra il moto* (Considerations concerning motion) was reviewed.¹¹ This work proved to be crucial for the intellectual development of Naples and of Doria. In it Doria directly challenged Porzio's 1704 *De motu corporum*, and implicitly took issue with Vico's *De antiquissima*.¹² Such

¹⁰ David R. Lachterman, "Vico, Doria e la geometria sintetica", *Bollettino del Centro di studi vichiani* 10 (1981), 31–46. On the more general transition of ancient to modern mathematics, Jacob Klein, *Greek Mathematical Thought and the origin of algebra*, trans. Eva Braun (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1968).

¹¹ Paolo Mattia Doria, *Considerazioni sopra il moto e la meccanica de'corpi sensibili* (Augusta: Daniello Hopper, 1711), bound with *Giunta di P.M. Doria* (1712). The place of publication, Augsburg was clearly false. He used the same false imprint for his 1710 edition of *La vita civile*.

¹² Maurizio Torrini, *Dopo Galileo: Una polemica scientifica (1684–1711)* (Firenze: Olschki, 1979), 194–237. This explains Porzio's position and the reactions to it. Vico wrote the approval letter for Antonio Galeota's *Dissertio de momento*, a defense of Porzio.

a confrontation between scholars who were more or less on the same side hadn't been seen for a good long while in Naples. Perhaps the *Giornale* had already had an effect and encouraged scholars to bring their controversies before the public. Scarcely 30 years before Aulisio and Di Capoa had had a vicious quarrel about rainbows, but very little of it appeared in print. Repercussions were still felt some 15 years after Di Capoa's death. One sign of the comparatively greater freedom enjoyed by the press under the Austrians was the openness in which the quarrel proceeded.¹³ This controversy between Porzio and Doria was not one of hostile adversaries; Doria wrote an approval letter in 1711 for Porzio's *Lettere e discorsi accademici*, published by Muzio. At the time this exchange was understood in the same vein as the poetic challenges found in the commemorative marriage volumes.

The *Giornale* by reviewing Doria's book gave his argument authority; they praised his solid argument and learning. The purpose of Porzio's book was to call into question Galileo's conclusion that a universal law of gravity acted on bodies in free fall and on those rolling down an inclined plane. In attacking Porzio, Doria was defending Galileo and his method of applying geometry to nature.¹⁴ Vincenzo Ferrone has summarized these arguments and explained the roles of the different participants.¹⁵ Vico must have learned his Galileo from Porzio; how else are we to understand Vico's claim in *De antiquissima* that Galileo did not bring the geometrical method into physics?¹⁶ Here Vico is repeating the claims Porzio made in his own *De motu*.

The core of the different points of view between Doria and Vico at this time can be handily summed up in their understandings of

¹³ This quarrel has been the at the heart of the recent controversy between Ajello and De Giovanni. De Giovanni, in *Storia di Napoli*, vol. 6, 459–61, argues that in the early eighteenth century Naples witnessed a decline in its intellectual strength; Doria's *Considerazioni* is a prime piece of his evidence. Ajello, in his "Cartesianismo e cultura oltremontana al tempo dell'Istoria civile" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, p. 103, argues that Doria represented a marginal voice, and that this time was a productive one for Neapolitan scholars. See also Alessandro Dini, *Filosofia della natura medicina, religione: Lucantonio Porzio (1639–1724)* (Milan: F. Angeli, 1985), pp. 121–129. I strongly agree with Ajello's interpretation. I doubt if even the actual participants had clear ideas of the substance of the quarrel.

¹⁴ Vittorio Conti, "Le polemiche matematiche di Paolo Mattia Doria", *Bollettino del centro di studi vichiani* (1981), 11, 285–298.

¹⁵ Vincenzo Ferrone, *Scienza, natura religione*, pp. 114–129.

¹⁶ G. Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, p. 125.

the terms *conatus* (force or effort) and *motus* (motion). *Conatus* was a complex term and lacking a precise usage. Both terms had been brought into particular focus by the Cartesian separation of mind and body; different vocabularies were thought necessary to describe mental operations and material movements. While *motus* had a fairly conventional usage, *conatus* had a range of applications. For Newton *conatus* meant force; Leibniz used it to mean a vector or a directed velocity. In Naples the term had had a varied usage. Giovanni Alfonso Borelli in the 1660s used it as a kind of blanket term for all kinds of energies. Vico used *conatus* to explain the transition between motion and rest; it was unextended, hence related to the spiritual, but like Zeno's metaphysical points, able to effect extended matter. *Conatus* had an indefinite power of motion that could explain how unequal motions could come out of an equal force; thus Vico's approach harmonizes with Porzio's denial of universal laws of motion. Vico went on to argue that all mechanical force is imparted by air pressure and is guided by the hand of God.

This was too much for Doria, how could air, he argued, which was mere inert body, impress or cause motion? Some other medium was necessary to convey this energy. Instead of air pressure, Doria proposed an immaterial ether rotating in a circle whose revolutions would produce results corresponding to the inverse square law of gravitational acceleration. From this simple principle of the rotating ether he could provide a general geometric theory of the motions of physical bodies. His proofs only dealt with the most general case; his demonstrations never get to actual physical bodies. But his hypothesis of ether meant he could avoid Vico's undefined and indefinite *conatus* principle. Doria, at least later, would associate this kind of thinking with the undefined "x" of algebra; and, as he saw it, it was by habituating the mind to use concepts of indeterminate content that modern mathematics lost its role in preparing humanity for metaphysical reflection, moral reasoning, and in training the individual to apply general principles to specifics. Vico, on the other hand, gradually seems to have seen an advantage to using indefinite principles. For example, in *Scienza nuova* terms like natural right have a clear function but lack a precise content.¹⁷ Doria's *Considerazioni*

¹⁷ Alain Boureau, "Books of emblems on the public stage: 'côté jardin' and 'côté cour'", in *The culture of print: power and the uses of print in early modern Europe*, Roger Chartier, ed., Lydia Cochrane, trans. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,

may have contributed to Vico's decision of not to go further with the second and third book of the *De antiquissima* project. Certainly Doria's work, and the controversy surrounding it made it clear that reconciling the Platonists with the atomists was going to be more complex than Vico had originally imagined. Zeno and Pythagoras were not yet brought together.

1989), 267–269. Boureau argues that the development of seventeenth-century algebra pioneered by Viète should be understood in the context of the rage for books of emblems: “The same processes were at work in Viète and in emblematics: thinking about the general, in itself inaccessible and mute; using the means of the particular without losing one’s way in occurrences; speculating on forms and representations by neutralizing their relation to concrete reality.” Vico adapted the general method of algebraic/emblematic thinking to explain how the rational mind might understand the pre-rational thinking of earlier times.

CHAPTER TEN

PRINTING FOR THE DIFFERENT READING PUBLICS IN NAPLES

The decade or so between the end of the viceregency of Cardinal Grimani to the start of that of Cardinal Althann, 1710 to 1722, has proved troublesome for cultural historians of Naples. The 1690s were punctuated by the controversies over the Inquisition, Benedetti's *Lettere*, and the Academy of Medina Coeli. The Macchia conspiracy, the Austrian invasion and the struggle over ecclesiastical benefices highlighted aspects of Naples' history and experience at the beginning of the century. The *Giornale de Letterati* seemed to give the intellectual community an initial sense of purpose, but its ongoing influence was limited. Until Giannone's *Istoria civile* of 1723 and his expulsion there was no cause or event that galvanized Naples. Even the Spanish invasion of Sicily seemed to disturb only upper level administrators. Biagio Di Giovanni, writing in 1970 dismissed this period as one of intellectual failure for Naples because it did not provide a serious grounding for the accomplishment of Vico and Giannone. This view has been, in large measure answered by Raffaele Ajello, at least in respect to Giannone's work.¹ Ajello has demonstrated the intellectual vitality and sophistication of the intellectual debates continuing in Naples. My intent will be to describe and trace a series of different topics from the perspective of the book trade in Naples. In following out the stories of specific authors or themes, I will not make a synchronic account of all that was published. The works of this publishing community, I argue, influenced the composition and subsequent reception of Vico's *Scienza nuova*.

The greatest number of books published in Naples were religious works, lives of saints, sermons, prayers, and other works of spiritual consolation and affirmation. Most were written in prose, but some

¹ Biagio Di Giovanni, "La vita intellettuale a Napoli fra la metà del '600 e la restaurazione del regno" in *Storia di Napoli* (Napoli: Società Editrice Storia di Napoli, 1970), 6, 401–534; Raffaele Ajello, "Cartesianismo e cultura oltremontana al tempo dell'«Istoria civile»" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, ed. R. Ajello (Napoli: Jovene, 1980), 3–181.

were works in the genre of religious poetry. The intended audience of some were clearly clerics, works like confessor's manuals, for example. For others a mixed readership of clergy and laity was presumed. These works must have had a steady reading public, or have been heavily subsidized because they were regularly printed. Such works have elements of the self-help book about them, and contain recommendations of how to deal with death and other sources of anxiety. References to publications in this genre can be found in private correspondence, but they are notifications that so and so has published a new work. They seem the kind of books readers wanted and were read for their edifying value; they epitomized or contributed to a tradition and did not challenge the past it represented as had those on ecclesiastical benefices.

The reading public in Naples took their saints seriously, though most books would not be as free-wheeling as Grazini's account of St. Amato. Readers were interested in the kind of Biblical criticism Grimaldi described in his first refutation of Benedetti. The printing press in both simple and complex ways was spreading the idea that the Bible was a book just like any other. Methods of analysis and understanding that were used to analyze a work of human authorship gradually came to be applied to the Bible. The expectations of readers as to what could be found in the Bible were perhaps greatest at the end of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Not only did readers have the traditional presuppositions that they would find useful truths, and the Truth itself; they also expected explanations of the origins of all human accomplishment and perfection, all arts and sciences. And it was not an uncommon supposition that Hebrew perfection could also interpret the primitive experience of the rest of humanity.

An example of this approach was that of Athanasius Kircher, a Jesuit scientist who organized a complex research program into universal knowledge from Rome. Among the excellences he attributed to the Hebrews was the origin of music and also of rhythmic verse. As a sign of their antiquity he notes the predominance of the dactyl and the spondee in their poetry.² Jean Le Clerc, first in 1688 in *La Bibliothèque universelle*, modified this view and argued that the Hebrew language was not suited to metrical poetry, but that its poetry was

² Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis* (Roma: 1650), p. 63. G. Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, *Scienza nuova*, 504, 508 (# 449, 465) on the issue of dactyls and spondees.

full of rhyme. Neapolitan scholars also entered the debate concerning Hebrew poetry, and the first to publish on it was an ecclesiastic, Biagio Garofalo, born in Salerno in 1677. In the first decade of the century he was one of the few who dared to publish what he had learned from the ideas of Biblical criticism proposed by Spinoza and Richard Simon.³ In 1707 Garofalo's *Considerazioni intorno alla poesia degli Ebrei e dei Greci* (Considerations concerning the poetry of the Hebrews and the Greeks) appeared in Rome.⁴ Garofalo dealt first with the explosive issue of the authority of the Hebrew Biblical text contending as had Spinoza and Simon, that it was in need of textual revision. He discussed the custom of all ancient peoples of preserving their laws in poetry. In the second part of his work he explained how in Greece poets were expected to use popular fictions to persuade the uneducated to chose right behaviors. Such examples supported the Arcadian claim concerning the value of poetry in reforming the bad habits of a people. On the issue of whether Hebrew used rhyme or rhythm Garofalo sided with the Protestant Le Clerc. A Paduan Jew named Raffaele Rabbegno, using the pseudonym Bernabò Scacchi, wrote a refutation of Garofalo's work in 1710.⁵ Garofalo replied in 1711, this time using the pseudonym Ottavio Maranta; and this was answered by Fabio Carselini, apparently a real person.⁶ The entire controversy was reviewed in the *Giornale* in 1711.⁷ It should be noted that the Index was circumspect on Garofalo's book, it was only condemned in 1718.

Domenico Aulizio, the teacher of Giannone and a friend of Vico, prepared a manuscript on the topic of Hebrew poetics which was published after his death in 1723 with the title *Delle scuole sacre*.⁸ We

³ Paul Hazard, *The European Mind: The critical years (1680–1715)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 196. Besides Vico and Gravina, Garofalo is the only other Neapolitan scholar Hazard includes in this masterful study. Vincenzo Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione*, 378–382.

⁴ Biagio Garofalo, *Considerazioni intorno alla poesia degli Ebrei e dei Greci* (Roma: Gonzaga, 1707).

⁵ Raffaele Rabbegno, *Squarcio di lettere del Dottore Bernabò Scacchi sopra le considerazioni del Signor B.G. intorno alla poesia degli Ebrei* (Padova, 1710).

⁶ During these same years Garofalo was involved in another controversy involving Orsi and Bouhours concerning the proper relation between words and thoughts. Biagio Garofalo, *Ragionamento in difesa delle considerazioni sopra il libro della maniera di ben pensare . . .* (Roma: Francesco Gonzaga, 1708). Vico discussed the controversy in *De studiorum ratione*. See Mario Fubini, "Vico e Bouhours" in his *Stile e umanità di G.B. Vico*, (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1965), 135–146.

⁷ *Giornale de' Letterati* (1711), 6, 499.

⁸ Filippo Liotta, "Aulizio, Domenico", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 4, 584–587.

don't know when Aulisio wrote this work, but it would fit most appropriately in the controversy between Garofalo and Rabbegno. The work is divided into two parts, the first dealt with the academic institutions of the Hebrews, the second with those of the Christians. Aulisio discussed problems with the textual transmission and tradition of the Hebrew Bible; analyzed the character and beliefs of the different sects of the ancient Hebrew intellectual community; and concluded with an analysis of the forms of Hebrew poetry. The purpose of the second part concerned the communities of the early Christians and how they first came into contact with Greek philosophy. Aulisio continued his account, in more summary fashion through the Middle Ages. His general point continued the arguments expressed in the 1690s on behalf of Cartesianism and modern philosophy, especially the importance of keeping fields of scholarly investigation separate from theology.

His work was an example of the kind of study Grimaldi had promoted in his reply to Benedetti. It was a serious historical investigation of the Hebrews and early Christians, and did not pretend to be a theological investigation. Theology was for other professionals; his aim was historical. The last chapter in the book is a chronological table apparently prepared by his editor, Biagio Troise. The last two dates in the list are the most telling. They are 1670, the publication date of Spinoza's notorious *Tractatus theologico-politicus*; Spinoza, in the explanation of the date was characterized as a materialist who denied that the universe had an "architect". The last date was 1723, the date of this publication which claimed to answer Spinoza's challenge. When *Delle scuole sacre* appeared it served more as a memorial to a previous generation's scholarship than as a contribution to a debate. The work does, however, give insight into ideas that Giannone and Vico may have heard Aulisio speak on. Troise was a Cartesian, a friend of Cirillo and taught canon law at the University. He was also a colleague of Vico, and on occasion would write in the volumes of celebratory verse. Giannone, who had reason to know, felt that Troise's edition hadn't done justice to Aulisio's manuscript; but Giannone promoted the book in Vienna and made sure the work was reviewed by the *Acta Eruditorum*. For Neapolitan readers these works were their local sources for non-theological interpretations of the Bible.

Gravina's Reform of Poetry and of Law

Gravina, born in 1664, was from Cosenza, the home of Cornelio, Argento, and Caloprese. Caloprese, who was also his cousin, tutored him as a student in his academy. Gravina was in Naples in the 1680s where he studied with Serafino Biscardi. In 1688 he was sent to Rome to work for the interests of the Pignatelli family, a lucky choice for Antonio Pignatelli became Pope Innocent XII in 1691. Gravina made his mark as a founding member of the Arcadia in Rome. It might be fair to compare his activity to that of an active member of the editorial board on a new interdisciplinary journal. The Arcadia project became the center point of his life. This organization and its aspirations brought together for him what were otherwise disparate activities.⁹ One of these was the character of Italian poetry, which was an obvious development from the Arcadia; the second concerned Roman law and legal reform. The members of the Arcadia were all committed to certain linguistic reforms and values, and particularly on what constituted fine writing. While all members agreed on the importance of a clear and direct style, there were differences as to the proper proportion of pleasure and moral instruction in creative writing. Gravina, who opposed the Jesuits and especially their use of casuistry, had a bias towards using poetry for moral education.

In 1696 Gravina wrote the laws for Arcadia, a collection of short essays and dialogues, and his first major work of literary theory, the *Discorso delle antiche favole* (Discourse on ancient stories), published in Rome.¹⁰ In 1708 this work became Book I of *Della ragion poetica* (Concerning poetic rules, or poetic rights). Among his major arguments was that in the ancient world poetry was the way the common people were educated. Under this title it had a wide circulation, being printed in Naples in 1716 by Parrino, 1732 by Mosca, and in Venice in 1731. The two titles indicate Gravina's direction of thought as he moved from his reconstruction of the ancient world to the present.

⁹ Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Studi recenti sul primo '700 Italiano: Gian Vincenzo Gravina e Antonio Conti", *Rivista storica italiana* (1970), 82, 611-644, on Gravina 611-627.

¹⁰ Amedeo Quondam, *Filosofia della luce e luminosi nelle egloghe del Gravina: documenti per in capitolo della cultura filosofica di fine Seicento*, pref. Nicola Badaloni (Napoli: Guida, 1970), 24. The *Dialogo* can be considered as a draft for arguments developed in the *Discorso*.

The ancients knew how to represent in clear direct speech the complexity of human feeling. Modern poetry must learn to do the same. Gravina was convinced that human experience could be accurately represented in language: words did not merely approximate what we feel, they could express it. What he seemed to admire most in the ancient masters was that they did not exaggerate, but produced an effortless verisimilitude. The ancient poets, through well-chosen similes and personifications were able to lead and direct their audience to practice moderation and decency. And, Gravina, later, was to see poetry and especially tragedy as the way to prepare individuals to take on the responsibilities of self-government.¹¹

Gravina left aside his work on ancient poetry, in part because in 1699 he was made professor of civil law at the Sapienza, which served as the university for Rome. In 1701 he published in Naples the *De ortu et progressu juris civilis* (The rise and course of civil law); it described the entire history of the study of Roman law. Nicolo Caravita wrote the secular approval letter. A revised and corrected edition appeared in Leipsig in 1704. It lists each step in the development of Roman law, identifying the most significant laws and legislators. A comparison of this work with Valletta's history of philosophy shows the greater sophistication of legal studies. To be sure there are passages that are little more than lists of names of teachers and students. And, being a follower of the Renaissance humanists, he believed there was a pristine law text and a correct interpretation that the critical scholar could recover. But sometimes he will explain the work of a jurist in terms of their personal characteristics and at others he will relate their views to the political concerns of their times. Unlike some of his Renaissance predecessors he did not regard Justinian's legislation as the origin of legal excellence; for him it was the Law of the XII Tables. The XII Tables was the interesting one because it created civil law, Justinian's work was a mere compilation.

In 1708 Gravina had a period of remarkable creativity when several projects come to fruition. In that year he published his *Della ragon poetica* which was printed first in Rome in 1708, then in Naples by Parrino in 1716 and Mosca in 1732. This work and the essay on tragedy appeared together in one volume in Venice in 1731. In *Della*

¹¹ Giuseppe Ricuperati, *La linguistica dei mercatanti* (Napoli: Grafitalia-Cercola, 1987), 64–67, 74. Michele Rak, *La fine dei grammatici: teoria e critica della letteratura nella storia delle idee del tardo Seicento italiano* (Roma: Bolzoni, 1974), 285–291.

ragion poetica Gravina now believed that there was a clear connection between political liberty and the greatest poetry. Homer's accomplishment, his poetic creativity and inventiveness, derived in part from the freedom that obtained in the earliest societies.¹² As he saw it, the dominance of Tuscan as the language of Italy could be explained from the history of the Florentine Republic. The Florentines were used to public debate and the public expression of many ideas and feelings, thus the linguistic resources of this dialect made it the richest source for a new language.¹³ In this work he also reviewed the productions of modern Italian poets, and concluded that poetry should have a more sublime role, encouraging people to adopt more elevated language in their speech. This he seemed to see as an important step in the growth of self governance in Italian states.

At the same time Gravina completed a major work on Roman jurisprudence. As with *Della ragion poetica*, Gravina used his earlier work, *De ortu et progressu*, as the first book of his *Originem juris civilis* (The origin of civil law). It appeared first in Leipsig in 1708. This was followed by Neapolitan editions in 1713 and 1722, and later editions in Leipsig in 1717 and 1737.¹⁴ A Venetian edition was printed in 1739. *De ortu* had focused on the greatest interpreters of Roman laws. In Books 2 and 3 of the new work Gravina discussed Roman legislation: Book 2 centered on natural law and its relation to the Laws of the XII Tables; Book 3 examined subsequent legislation relevant to the establishment of civil justice. Gravina's argument is complex, mixing precise, narrow scholarly points with grand generalizations which relate historical context and judicial practice. His concern was to show how political stability may be best established. Like Doria he was interested in devising strategies to prevent the instability created by the popular insurrections such as those that frightened rulers in the middle years of the seventeenth century.¹⁵ In the well run state the government administration would be directed by learned jurists who would develop policies based on rational prin-

¹² On Gravina, and in general on the Homeric question, see Kirsti Simonsuuri, *Homer's original genius: Eighteenth-century notions of the early Greek epic (1688–1798)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 87–89.

¹³ Gian Vincenzo Gravina, *Della ragion poetica*, (Venice, 1731), pp. 86–87 (chap. 8).

¹⁴ The 1717 edition was reviewed in the 1718 *Bibliothèque anciennes & moderne*, 184–217.

¹⁵ Nicola Badaloni, *Introduzione a Vico*, 257–58, explains how the XII Tables removed ferocity from the people.

ciples.¹⁶ The XII Tables, in his view, were the first historical example for which we have sufficient evidence to observe the resolution of an unstable political situation by means of civil law.

Gravina's work was more what one might call revisionist rather than revolutionary in spirit. He was quite learned in archaic Latin and his work contained considered discussions of difficult passages. He accepted the traditional story about the composition of the laws. The XII Tables exemplified rational legislation by a free people. As Tuscan, the people's language of Florence which had been created in an atmosphere of liberty of expression, became the language of the Italians, so Roman Republican law could become the model for other nations. The XII Tables were a paragon of legislation, but of equal importance were the interpreters of the law, the wise men, the competent judges like Gravina himself, who could explain meanings with authority. Language and politics, Arcadia and The XII Tables, were aspects of his grand project of reform for Italy. The basis of this reform was the idea of trust; this concept was central to the Roman concept of contract. The first law of Table VI makes clear that when a person makes a verbal agreement, it is binding. Here Gravina permits himself one of his rare direct criticisms of Jesuit moral teaching, and wished that the casuists would come to their senses and affirm without reservations or distinctions such simple principles of right action.¹⁷ Gravina, in repeating the principle of trust also echoed the language of Naples' Inquisition controversy. It indicates his unwillingness to abandon the old argument that based political authority on consensus, the *consensus gentium*.

While Gravina admired the legislation of the Decemvirs, his real hero was not their leader, Appius Claudius, as it had been for Machiavelli, but another Appius Claudius distinguished from his ancestor by the epithet *Caecus*, the blind. This Appius was the first to appoint freedmen to the Senate; he also revealed to the plebs the *leges actiones*, the legal formulas used in contracts as well as the list of dates on which legal business must be done. The plebeians may have had access to the laws but they had lacked the information needed to use the law. What Appius Claudius Caecus did was to reveal the

¹⁶ Raffaele Ajello, *Arcana juris: diritto e politica nel Settecento Italia* (Napoli: Jovene, 1976), 342–3, note 108, 137–8, 173–4.

¹⁷ Gian Vincenzo Gravina, *Originis juris civilis*, p. 202. "Utinam hoc insideret, casuistis nostris!".

arcana juris civilis scientia (the secret science of civil law) to the people.¹⁸ Only then, were the people truly empowered. Gravina imagined such a role for himself, it seems; at least that was the reputation he had around the Roman Arcadia. In Arcadia, this came to a head in 1711 when Gravina and a small group of friends seceded. He had conceived the Arcadia as an agent of change, but it was clear to him that the leadership didn't want to go any further than platitudes and that their strongest impulse was some headshaking over the excesses of early seventeenth century poets. The Arcadian quarrel was another indication of the lesson of the times that the combination of formalism with Jansenist attitudes proved explosive when brought in the vicinity of individuals who affirmed laxer Jesuitical styles.

In 1712 Gravina published in Naples a collection of five tragedies with a long introductory preface. Among his aims must have been to show his rivals what real poetry and drama should be. He modeled his plays on his theories of Greek tragedy. Actors spoke in blank verse; rhyme was only permitted to the chorus. Among the plays is an *Appio Claudio*. In Gravina's play, Valerius, a patrician, has the moderation and moral sense to propound those plebeian demands that are consonant with the public good. In Act II, Valerius rejects the Machiavellianism represented by Appius, who argues that the multitude will not complain that his authority is only based on force. Valerius' political position is similar to that developed by Doria in *La vita civile*; it is not surprising that Gravina dedicated his 1715 work on tragedy to Doria.

Gravina's tragedies have received some pretty harsh criticism. This is probably to be expected for any literary critic who attempts fictional work. The plays were claimed to be unbearably dull and this view has been repeated by contemporary critics; but this is only a part of the story. Vico wrote the secular approval letter, and his fulsome praise for the conception and execution of the plays need not be regarded merely as praise written on order; the work seemed to have had an audience. It should be noted that after the initial printing by Mosca in 1712, another edition followed in 1717 by Parrino. Bernardino Gessari had copies to sell in his bookstore in 1734, and in 1740 a Venetian printer came out with a new edition,

¹⁸ Gian Vincenzo Gravina, *Originis iuris civilis*, "De jure naturali, gentium et XII Tabularum" (chapter 79), p. 267.

presumably believing there was still a market for the work. This rather successful publishing history would suggest that the tragedies enjoyed a certain amount of genuine success.

In 1715 Gravina published a theoretical work on tragedy and reprinted the Prologue spoken by Tragedy that had preceded his five plays. *Ragion poetica*, she proclaims is ready to legislate for the people; and, these laws would form strong bonds between the people and their ruler. Gravina had worked out, to his satisfaction, the proper relation of poetry to politics; he now turned his attention to ecclesiastical law. This work, which was to parallel his work on civil law remained unpublished when he suddenly died in 1718. His comrade, student, and then executor, Metastasio set about trying to publish his *Istituzioni canoniche* which finally appeared in Turin in 1742. The year before this publication a group of Neapolitans issued his *Nuova raccolta di opuscoli* (New Collection of short works), printed by Giovanni di Simone. The publisher, Bernardino Gessari, dedicated the work to Giuseppe Aurelio di Gennaro. Giannantonio Sergio, in his "Note to the Reader" explains Gravina's intellectual context and mentioned Aurelio di Gennaro and Vico as being especially influenced by his work.¹⁹ Sergio praised Vico's *Il dritto universale* (Universal Law), but makes no mention of *Scienza nuova*. This was typical of the reactions of Vico's friends; his earlier Latin work received more attention than the editions of *Scienza nuova*.

Vico was the first Neapolitan to follow Gravina's lead in the investigation of The Law of the XII Tables. Vico had written an approval letter for Gravina's tragedies; this indicates that already Vico had acquired a local reputation (though he had not published on the subject) for his knowledge of archaic Rome; his name would lend credit to Gravina's work. They were friends and Vico's autobiography records his pleasure in Gravina's positive response to his life of Antonio Caraffa. Vico during these years had started a commentary on Grotius' *On the Laws of War and Peace*. But by 1719 he had set this aside and began a new book which was to culminate in a revolutionary approach to the Law of the XII Tables. Like Gravina, Vico thought of the XII Tables as a model for contemporary legal reform. Hence, it is not surprising that he dedicates *Il dritto universale* to Vincenzo Vidania, a member of Naples' legal establishment. Vico

¹⁹ Gian Vincenzo Gravina, *Nuova raccolta di opuscoli* (Napoli: Giovanni di Simone, 1741), Sergio's "Note" is unpaginated.

was in his early 50s when he published *De uno universi juris principio et fine uno* (On the one principle of universal law and its one end) and *De constantia jurisprudentis* (On the consistency of the Jurisprudent); these two works are customarily referred together as *Il diritto universale* (The Universal Law).²⁰ I will only discuss one major topic from this complex treatise.

Vico disagreed with large parts of the story concerning the composition of The XII Tables. He emphatically denied that the Tables owed anything to Greek influences; the embassy sent to either Athens or Sparta was an invention of a later time. And he even denied that anything like a law code was created at least in 451 BC; the Tables too were an invention of a later era. But something significant had happened in 451 BC. In Vico's view this was the moment of Rome's second major agrarian law, a law aimed at resolving long-standing disputes about property between the patricians and the plebeians. This law gave the Plebeians full property rights over their land—though they would soon discover other laws were needed to guarantee their right to inherit property. While Gravina had looked to the XII Tables as a way of ending revolution, Vico's analysis focused on the issue of how the nobility retained status and power in times of social reform. In Vico's view, the nobility had succeeded in responding to the plebs demand for rights without altering the social hierarchy. Instead of focusing on issues of order and stability, Vico's analysis concerned how a reform of fundamental laws might leave the aristocracy unaffected. When he wrote this did Vico have in mind the revolution of Masienello? Certainly the Spanish managed to shape events so that the consequences of promised change were only superficial alterations. The middle and lower classes in Naples ended up with no more power than what they had had before. In *Scienza nuova* Vico developed his notion of the succession of regimes proceeding from heroic aristocracy, to democracy and settling in monarchy or oligarchy.²¹ It is not clear whether he believed the short interlude of

²⁰ Mark Lilla, *G.B. Vico: The Making of an Anti-Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 70–103, argues that Vico's notion of universal right and especially its theological premises makes Vico an anti-modern. He also contends that the substance of Vico's original contribution is present in *Il diritto universale*. My account follows the traditional view Vico outlines in his Autobiography which emphasizes the importance of the work's principles of organization and its claim to be a science. And I accept Vico's criticism that *Il diritto universale* had not yet developed the subjective method he created to understand culture.

²¹ Norberto Bobbio, "Vico e la teoria delle forme di governo", *Bolletino del Centro*

popular government at the time of Masienello constituted Naples' democratic phase, nor does he define what corresponded with the Second Agrarian Law. The theme that persisted in all of the editions of *Scienza nuova* was that democratic values and notions of equality were supported by the revolutionary violence of the poor. It was the poor who brought rational thinking to humanity.²²

Later, in *Scienza nuova* he argued that the Homeric poems were created over several generations, he also claimed that the XII Tables were a product of Roman tradition and habits. But Vico went even further claiming that the XII Tables were actually poems too. Cicero, to be sure, had said that children sang the laws in school, and in Rome's Salian songs Vico claimed to hear *un aria di verso heroico* (an air of heroic verse). Vico's interest shifted to music and singing. He talked of Homer in *The Universal Law*, he had not yet formulated his theory of poetic imagination. A telling example is his new understanding of Gravina's hero, Appius Claudius Caecus. In the *Universal Law* the role he assigned to this Appius was very similar to that given him by Gravina; in *Scienza Nuova* this Appius is transformed into an heroic poet like Orpheus, Amphion or Linus, who sings to the Plebs the laws of the heroic city. Instead of the liberator as Gravina saw him, Vico thinks of Appius as a promulgator of patrician ideology. For Vico, the XII Tables came to be less significant as he wrote and then revised *Scienza nuova*. His explanation of the *forctes sanates* law had been the culmination of *The Universal Law*; in the final edition of *Scienza Nuova* he only mentioned that law once; he did, however, repeat his claim that the XII Tables was the second Agrarian Law for Rome.

Giannone and the Issue of Neapolitan Reform

One theme implicit in the study of the Law of the XII Tables concerned the issue of legal reform and how it should be done. The

di studi vichiani, (1978), 8, 5-27; August C. 't Hart, "La teoria vichiana sulla successione delle forme di stato, 1. Le sue implicazioni politiche", *Bolletino del Centro di studi vichiani* (1987-1988), 17-18, 153-162.

²² Michele Scherillo, *L'opera buffa napoletana* (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 1975), 188-190, noted that in 1727, Francesca Oliva, a writer of Neapolitan comic opera librettos, produced a poem in dialect concerning Masienello's revolution. Such a connection might suggest that works in Neapolitan might well have revolutionary implications.

approaches of Gravina and Vico represented one way, other Neapolitans addressed directly the need for legal reform in Naples. Such studies involved not only judicial matters but the political and social history of Naples. The Austrians encouraged or at least permitted local historical interests to develop. After all they began their rule by emphasizing Naples' independence not only from Spain but also from Rome. In 1710 *Le vite de' letterati Salentini* (Biographies of scholars from Salerno) appeared. It claimed to be published in Florence, but from the approval letters, the dedication to Giuseppe Valletta, Giacinto Cristofaro's "Note to the Reader", and Biagio Majoli d'Avitabile's involvement, it is much more likely to be a Naples production. Part 2, which appeared in 1713, quoted from reviews of the earlier volume taken from the *Giornale*. In 1713 Antonio Ricchi published another work of local history, *La Reggia de' Volsci*; the place of publication is Naples and the printer was Onofrio Pace. Angelo de Costanza's 1582 history of Naples was reprinted in 1710.²³ Tommaso Maria Alfano talked about publishing some Tomistic manuscripts, a history of Church councils held in southern Italy, an edition of letters of Peter Damian, and to top it all off was to be a *Rerum Neapolitanarum scriptores*; but none of these projects were realized.²⁴ Even Vico, after his metaphysical explorations on *De antiquissima* wrote a history of the military exploits of the local hero Antonio Carafa who had commanded Austrian armies in the recent wars against the Ottoman Empire. Typical of another kind of antiquarian work was that published in 1711 of the Duke and Baron Giuseppe D'Alessandro who wrote poems on the noble duties of knighthood, the handling of weapons; he addressed his odes not only to his horse, but to his saddle and spurs as well.

There was a growing interest in producing a new Neapolitan history. As I have mentioned, Basilio Giannelli claimed to be writing a history of Italy. But no trace of this manuscript work has been found. The Jesuit Giannetasio did complete his *Historia Neapolitana* which was published in 1713 by Muzio. The approval letters all date from 1707 and 1708 which would suggest the work was done at that time but for some reason was published five years later. Perhaps the Austrian invasion, and its positive view of Spanish rule, delayed the

²³ The edition was briefly reviewed in the *Giornale de' Letterati*, (1710), 3, 517-519.

²⁴ Fausto Nicolini, "Alfano, Tommaso Maria" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 2, 260-261.

publication; I found no evidence that it circulated in manuscript prior to publication. The frontispiece, an image of the author writing along with Mercury collecting bones, was designed by Paolo de Matteis; if the design was done around the publication date, it was during the time he was working for Shaftesbury and Aurora San Severino. Giuseppe Valletta wrote the letter to the reader; the work was dedicated to Carlo Carafa-Pacecco, the same person to whom the 1710 Galileo had been dedicated. Giannetasio had gone a long way from his association with Benedetti. Pietro Giannone, who was working on his own history of Naples, had a case of the jitters on its appearance; as he read it, he realized how much further he had gone and dismissed the book as being in large measure a Latin translation of Summonte. Even if true we might well ask what was a Jesuit doing translating a condemned book into Latin? From Giannone's point of view Giannetasio had not been able to answer the questions of Naples' recent history with Rome and to explain why Spain had failed.

Besides Giannetasio's work, there were other publishing projects underway that indicated that new interests had developed. In 1719 a Neapolitan edition of Arthur Duck's *De usu et autoritate iuris civilis Romanorum in dominiis principum christianorum* (The usage and authority of Roman civil law in Christendom) was published. It was dedicated to Domenico Caravita, the son of Nicolo. When Giannone began work on *Istoria civile* in 1702 he noted the extreme rarity of Duck's work.²⁵ Duck had attempted a cross-cultural study of Roman law; Gravina had used it as a source. Another related Neapolitan publication was that of Cujas' legal works.²⁶ Cujas was a French jurist of the early sixteenth century who had applied principles of historical criticism to the study of Roman law. Among the earliest law books Giannone learned to value was Jacques Cujas' commentary on *De feudis* (Concerning Feuds). Because of its rarity he decided to prepare a manuscript copy since no one could be persuaded to print it. In

²⁵ Pietro Giannone, *Vita*, p. 40.

²⁶ Isaiah Berlin, *Vico & Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (NY: Viking, 1976), pp. 125–140, argued that the French jurists of the Renaissance had an effect on Vico's development. Berlin regards this suggestion as a "partial answer" to the origins of Vico's main insights. While there is some basis for his suggestion, his hypothesis is much better suited to describe Giannone's ideas and method. See Zachary Schiffman, *On the threshold of modernity: relativism in the French renaissance* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 130–139. Schiffman, who knows the French jurists, wisely approaches Vico's relation to this tradition through Montaigne; his argument makes a case for specific insights Vico might have drawn from the jurists.

April of 1723, Muzio who had printed Giannetasio's history, published an edition of Cujas.²⁷

After the controversy over ecclesiastical benefices in 1708–9, there had been no major confrontations that had required the pens of the reform-minded sectors of Naples' legal community. The publication of Giannone's *Istoria civile del regno di Napoli* (The Civil History of the Kingdom of Naples) created new controversy for Neapolitan legists in the 1720s. His book was the first of the great enlightenment histories; Voltaire was dismissive, but it was an important model and source for Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. An English translation appeared in 1729–31 by an English sea captain named James Ogilvie.²⁸ Giannone's history which described the rise of Naples as the major power in the middle of the Mediterranean, and its subsequent decline due in part to Papal and priestly plotting was a popular theme with London book buyers. Hume, Robertson and Gibbon successfully expanded and exploited this market. His English readers could avoid certain anti-republican aspects of his work by concentrating with smug satisfaction on their own successful escape from the clutches of Rome. Giannone's book confirmed the popular Whig belief that it was their heroic expulsion of Rome that was the cause of England's subsequent greatness. *Istoria civile* never seemed to have caught on in France as it did in England. When a French translation did appear, it had more of an audience in Geneva and Amsterdam; when the French sought to criticize the Catholic Church it was with works like the *Encyclopedie*. Giannone's method had some French followers but their interest was to study the origins of the nobility and the feudal law; Montesquieu understood the potential of his method but distrusted its royalist bias. But their shared belief that genuine reform must be done with an awareness that laws were the products of a complex history was a genuine bond. It is not surprising, therefore, that Jacob Vernet, Giannone's friend in Geneva, was to later serve as editor, of the first edition of Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws*. An abridged French translation of *Istoria civile* appeared in Amsterdam in 1738, and a complete text was published in Geneva in 1742. In 1758, under the auspices of the historical school in

²⁷ Notice of this edition is carried in the April 6, 1723 edition of the *Avvisi di Napoli* published by Francesco Ricciardi.

²⁸ Pietro Giannone, *The Civil history of the Kingdom of Naples* (London: Innys, 1729–31), 2 vols.

Göttingen, the first volume of a German translation was published.²⁹ The final volume appeared in 1770. Despite the rarity of the Italian and the demand for it, a new edition did not appear until 1753. Seven editions appeared in the eighteenth century, eleven in the nineteenth century.³⁰ Its frequent publication in Italy until the 1860s indicated its important role in the cultures of enlightened reform and that of the striving for the unification of Italy under a secular state.

In certain respects, Giannone's history of Naples was exactly the kind of work the *ceto civile* had been seeking.³¹ This book brought together in one grand vision the disputes with Rome over issues of local autonomy, questions about benefices, investiture, the Inquisition, as well as quarrels between the local barons and the central administration in Naples. His narrative deepened the awareness of the interconnections between these issues. He described the history of southern Italy from Augustus down to 1723. The unifying theme of his work was an exposition of the meaning and development of sovereignty in Naples. His major task was to explain the formation of the Kingdom of Naples as a political unit. The concluding message of *Istoria civile* was extremely clear. There was in Naples, on the one hand, an original, creative community of legal scholars and scientists full of energy and intelligence. But, on the other, there was a stagnant economy held down because of the immense economic power of the Church. Despite its major accomplishments, Naples had not been able to overcome the debilitating heritage of its relation to the Papacy. The conclusion of this work and its general message was forthright. Implicit in Giannone's argument was the need to re-examine the claims about Divine Law made by the Papacy for itself. Not many Neapolitans were willing to go that far—but Giannone not only asked his readers to reconsider what it meant to be a Neapolitan or an Italian, but also what it meant to be a Catholic.

²⁹ Maria Luisa Pesante, *Stato e religione nella storiografia di Goettingen: Johann Friedrich Le Bret* (Torino: Giappichelli, 1971), 6–9, 28–31.

³⁰ Pietro Giannone, *Istoria civile*, ed. Antonio Marongiu, 1, 15–16.

³¹ The very utility of Giannone's work has involved him in accusations of plagiarism, as well as claims that his work was actually the work of a committee rather than one man. These accusations were revived after World War II by Carmelo Caristia, *Pietro Giannone e l'istoria civile e altri scritti Giannoniani* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1955). These charges were answered by Brunello Vigizzi, *Pietro Giannone, riformatore e storico* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1961); for new information and a review of the issue, see Raffael Ajello, "Pietro Giannone fra libertini e illuministi", *Rivista storica italiana*, 1975, 87, 104–131.

Giannone's *Istoria civile* had first appeared in February of 1723; the title page clearly stated Naples as the place of publication, and the printer was Niccolo Naso. Naso was a friend and neighbor of Giannone, and early in 1721 they agreed to work together to print *Istoria civile*. Giannone borrowed a press and they began this project which would take them about two years to complete. They printed eleven hundred copies, this involved a substantial investment for the four volumes in *ottavo*. Giannone choose not to attempt to acquire an ecclesiastical approval letter, believing that he would not get one, and with such advance notice, a hostile clergy might attempt to confiscate his work. Nevertheless, he did seek out and obtain a letter of approval from Niccolo Capasso. Capasso was an obvious choice for this task; and Capasso also obtained an approval from the Collateral Council. Opposition was slow to take coherent form, for even at the end of March leaders of the city were able to commend Giannone for his work and award him a substantial gift, as reported in the *Avvisi*.³² Giannone handed out a number of free copies and entrusted others to two booksellers in the city who sold a set for four ducats; this would be equivalent to the expense for a major appli-
ance today, or the publisher's price for a multivolume, lavishly illustrated edition. But, the stampede to buy it rapidly raised the price to 40 ducats, the equivalent price of a slightly used compact car.³³

By April, certain ecclesiastics were spreading rumors that Giannone was the devil's own. It wasn't necessary to read the book to have an opinion about it; one could just look up "papal investiture" in its index and the explanatory comment "from what weak foundations it was born" to know what was going on.³⁴ Hostile clergy asserted that San Gennaro was quite upset and might well take away his protection from the city, and that he would not perform his customary miracle, the liquification of his coagulated blood, on the first of May. Giannone had not anticipate a reaction of this intensity, nor to face angry crowds in the streets. The Venetian ambassador, in his April 6th letter to the Senate, made mention of the disturbances and noted

³² *Avvisi di Napoli*, (Napoli: Francesco Ricciardo) March 23, 1723.

³³ Pietro Giannone, *Vita*, 63–70.

³⁴ Pietro Giannone, *Dell'istoria civile del Regno di Napoli* (Napoli: Niccolò Naso, 1723), 4 vols. The Index is unpaginated, the entry is "Investitura Papali". If there were any doubts about his position, a glance at references such as "Regalie" and the introduction of printing, "stampa", would serve as answers.

that members of the nobility as well as the clergy were upset by the work. Giannone, perhaps less sensitive to aristocratic interests, chose not to mention the outrage felt by some nobles in his memoirs. This would indicate that even the first readers grasped that the reforms implicitly suggested by Giannone would not simply concern Church-state relations. The ambassador's April 20th letter to the Senate noted the involvement of the Papal nunzio.³⁵

Already plans were well underway to get Giannone safely out of the City. On the 21st he secretly departed having provided for his son Giovanni and having secured a residence in a monastery for his daughter Carmina Fortunata and Angela Elisabetta Castelli, his lover. He took it as a sign of his innocence that Cardinal Althann gave him a passport of safe conduct and arranged for him to be transported across the Kingdom to Manfredonia, then to Barletta where he found transportation to Trieste. His travel documents provided him with a false identity; on the road he was questioned by some Franciscans who were seeking information about that awful Giannone. Before he left southern Italy he had the satisfaction of learning that San Gennaro had indeed performed his expected miracle.

But in Vienna, Giannone was informed that he and his printer had been excommunicated on April 28. It was not until July 1 that his work was added to the Index. The excommunication was absolved in October, and by that time, Naso was released from the ecclesiastical prison.³⁶ Giannone, having established himself in Vienna, prepared a manuscript defense of his book, or, rather, an attack on his excommunication and the condemnation of his book.³⁷ The work was in the same tradition as that of Grimaldi's defense of his writing on ecclesiastical benefices. Giannone described the methods of clandestine printing that had developed with the tacit approval of the Austrian viceroys. This manuscript was the first of a series of works whose circulation he arranged from Vienna.

³⁵ ASV (Archivio di stato, Venice) "Dispacci degli ambasciatori al Senato" filza 120, 4/6/1723, 4/20/1723.

³⁶ Pietro Giannone, *Epistolario* ed. Pantaleo Minervini (Fasano di Puglia: Schena, 1983), pp. 56-59, 73-76, 77 (Letters 8, 15, 17).

³⁷ BNN MSS B Branc V C 18, "Trattato de rimedi contro le scomuniche invalide e proibizioni de'libri. . . ." See also Giuseppe Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone*, p. 232.

Naples' Ongoing Encounter with Descartes

Clandestine printing thrived in Naples under the guidance of Lorenzo Ciccarelli.³⁸ In 1713 Paolo Francone's Italian translation of Adrien Baillet's biography of Descartes was published in Naples. Francone was a Neapolitan Marquis; the work was dedicated to Paolo Mattia Doria. Basle was listed as the place of publication, though this is false. That same year Jacques Rohault's *Tractatus physicus* was published in Naples; it was a famous teaching text of Cartesian physics. The Neapolitan edition included the Newtonian Samuel Clarke's notes which were regularly included with this work. The only work of Newton published in Naples during these years was an edition of Bernard Verenius' *Geographia universalis* (Universal geography) which Newton had first published in 1672. Newton's editorial involvement was minimal.³⁹

Perhaps the most interesting of the works relating to Naples and Cartesianism of this period was the first Italian translation of Descartes' physics, *Les Principes*. The translation entitled *I principi della filosofia* (Philosophical Principles) was prepared by Giuseppa-Leonora Barbapiccola in 1722.⁴⁰ She translated this work from the French but made reference to the Latin. Barbapiccola was an Arcadian; and made clear in the Preface she expected a great deal of hostility from potential male readers who would naturally doubt the seriousness of anything done by a woman. She confronted her reader from an engraved image which faces the title page. In the unpaginated Preface, she wrote a lengthy defense of women's ability to make substantial contributions to philosophic issues and problems. There was a brief account of female philosophers and she offered thanks to Paolo Mattia Doria for his defense of female intelligence.⁴¹ She was certainly well read in the printed and manuscript writings of Neapoli-

³⁸ Gustavo Costa, "La cerchia dei duchi di Laurenzano e una collaborazione di Vico" in *Bollettino del Centro di studi vichiani* (1980), 10, 36–58.

³⁹ Richard S. Westfall, *Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1980), p. 252.

⁴⁰ Enzo Grillo, "Barbapiccola, Giuseppa Eleonora", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 6, 39.

⁴¹ It may not be amiss here to note that in 1720 Charles VI approved and confirmed the interpretation of a feudal law that had been used to exclude women from inheritance; Nicola Santamaria, *I feudi il diritto feudale e la loro storia nell'Italia meridionale* (Napoli: Ricc. Margheri di Gius, 1881), 272–275.

tans interested in Descartes. Valletta's defense of modern philosophy and Grimaldi's third refutation of Benedetti are cited; she knew that Francesco Spinelli was in the process of drafting a defense of Descartes' philosophy. A friend of Giambattista Vico, an intimate of his daughter, she referred to *De antiquissima* as a source for the idea that in antiquity the wise concealed their beliefs from the vulgar. She concluded her introduction, restating the claim made by the students of Galileo, that God used Scripture to teach morals, not physics.

The title page of Barbapiccola's work claimed the book to have been printed in Turin by Giovanni Francesco Mairesse. Was there a market for this sort of book in Turin? Unlike Naples, there doesn't seem to have been much indigenous interest in Descartes at this time. But the curriculum of the University of Turin was undergoing major revision during these years and its general direction was favorable to the principles of rationalism and experimentation. It is possible that the book was printed there as is claimed on the title page, though one may wonder whether a publisher would take a risk with a book written by an unknown woman. Barbapiccola, though an Arcadian, was not of noble birth. I have found no indication that Ciccattelli was involved with the publication; it is known that the book was on sale in 1734 in Gessari's bookshop. It would be unusual to have copies of a foreign book remain in stock so long, a publisher would typically only order what they could sell. Another explanation was that it was printed in Naples. If the work was actually printed in Naples it has the distinction of being the first of a series of pro-Cartesian works published there despite the censorship of the new Cardinal-Viceroy, the Count of Althann. Publishing translations of French works like those of Fenelon, whose morals were such that he disapproved of laughter, were more acceptable in Althann's Naples. Ricciardi published a translation of Fenelon's *Dialoghi d'uomini grandi* (Dialogues of great men) in 1722.

Barbapiccola was a friend of Vico's favorite daughter Luisa, and in fact, published a poem to her in a marriage volume of 1731. What did Vico make of his daughter's friend? A number of commentators on Vico have characterized him as an anti-Cartesian—indeed some critics are so emphatic on this antipathy to Descartes that it is difficult to imagine him allowing his daughter to associate with one of them. In 1728 Vico became friends with Antonio Maria da Palazzuolo, the famous Cappuchin lecturer and promoter of Cartesian philosophy and science. Vico gave him the manuscript of

the Inaugural lectures he delivered between 1699 and 1708.⁴² Vico's relationship with Descartes' thought is more complex in the 1720s than some have allowed. If Vico had wanted the reputation of an anti-Cartesian the 1720s was just the right political climate. But, if anything, his published works of this period are less critical than his early writings. This, however, did not mean he had changed his mind. Vico did not engage in a voluminous correspondence, but in the 1726 letters to Esperti and Vitry, and then in January of 1729 in letters to Francesco Solla and Francesco Estevan, he made clear his criticism of Descartes' continuing influence.⁴³ My point is that at a time when Vico could have been strongly critical of Descartes and have expected governmental support for this view, he did not vigorously attack his presumed opponent. His negative comments about Descartes, during this period, were not even printed in Naples but appeared in a Venetian journal. This, I believe, is an element of Vico's notion of academic freedom: he did not wish to use either the instruments of the Church or state to support his intellectual views. It is to Vico's credit that he did not join the anti-Cartesians simply for personal advancement, though he had motive.

Grimaldi Attempts to Republish his Benedetti Work

Costantino Grimaldi drew completely the wrong lessons from the Giannone episode.⁴⁴ He seems to have thought that Giannone's expulsion was an exceptional action. After all, Aulasio's work had appeared without any unusual interventions. And Grimaldi may even have inferred from the republication of Francesco Capececiatratro's mid-seventeenth century history of Naples in 1724 that things were back to normal. Anyway, he seemed to have reasoned, what could be the harm in republishing his refutations of Benedetti? He had published them before without censure, what difference could a couple of revisions make? Sometime during 1709 Grimaldi had sold all copies of the first edition of his three volume attack on Benedetti. He had

⁴² Elvira Gencarelli, "Antonio Maria da Palazzuolo", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 3, 585-586

⁴³ Giambattista Vico, *Opere*, Scrittori d'Italia 11 (Bari, Laterza, 1911), 5, 185-7, 189-92, 196-206.

⁴⁴ Raffaele Ajello, "Cartesianismo e cultura oltremontana al tempo dell'*Istoria civile*" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, 3-7.

written drafts of a part four and five, and had revised, expanded, and brought up to date the first three sections. In 1719 he obtained permission from the Collateral Council to publish his five part work. Grimaldi decided not to seek ecclesiastical permission, probably rightly presuming he couldn't get it. As he claimed later, ecclesiastical approval was merely a matter of custom; the need for it had never been sanctioned by the the State.⁴⁵

As Grimaldi described the publishing scene at this time in Naples, if one wanted to publish a book clandestinely, all one had to do was set up a press in one's house, slap a false title page on the front, and that would be that. As long as you didn't claim the work was published in Naples, the Church and the State were willing to turn a blind eye. Grimaldi borrowed type and equipment from the printer Nicolo Parrino and started printing the sheets. While the printing was going on the Archbishop Pignatelli complained to Grimaldi about the illegal printing that was going on in his house. But Grimaldi assured him he was not printing anything heretical, just his old work against Benedetti. To the extent that we can date these remarks, it must have been more or less contemporaneous with Giannone's printing the *Istoria civile*.

Grimaldi had at first intended to dedicate the work which appeared with a new title *Discussioni istoriche, teologiche e filosofiche* (Historical, theological and philosophical discussions) to Naples' viceroy, the Cardinal Althann. Because of pressure from the Archbishop, the Cardinal chose to separate himself from the project. Conservative Jesuits were back in fashion in the mid 1720s. In May of 1725 Cardinal Althann wrote to Grimaldi about the printing operation going on in his house, and requested that he use a publicly licensed printer.⁴⁶ To accommodate the Viceroy, at least what Grimaldi thought was the real message, he decided to list a false place of publication, Lucca, on the title page. As the book was coming off the press, Grimaldi, for good measure, obtained a letter from Father Lorenzo Pinelli to the effect that he found nothing contrary to faith in the work. Grimaldi's name appears on the title page, so the accusation of anonymity was avoided; it only included the expanded version of

⁴⁵ Costantino Grimaldi, *Memorie di un anticurialista del Settecento*, ed. Vittor Ivo Comparato (Firenze: Olschki, 1964), 44-46.

⁴⁶ Costantino Grimaldi, *Memorie di un anticurialista del Settecento*, 73-77.

the first three parts of his critique of Benedetti, the last two parts have remained in manuscript.

Despite ominous signs Grimaldi was taken by complete surprise when this work was placed on the Index in September of 1726. Copies of his work were confiscated by the Viceroy. Grimaldi seems to have been traumatized by this condemnation. He became convinced that there was a plot by the Jesuits to defame him and he sought help from his friends in Vienna. Grimaldi seems to have wanted a public exoneration from the state and an apology or retraction by the Index. These were not forthcoming and Grimaldi's reaction was to write a justification; this took the form of a manuscript autobiography.⁴⁷ His experience in publishing the second refutation of Benedetti had become the most extraordinary thing he had known, and the injustice he felt became the focus of his life. Grimaldi's autobiography, like that of Vico and Giannone, centered on the author's involvement with his books. The title of the work was *Istoria de'libri di D. Costantino Grimaldi* (A History of the books of Costantino Grimaldi) tells the story.⁴⁸ Grimaldi ended this account in 1728 but he had not resolved any of it to his satisfaction. In 1730 he began a correspondence with Giovanni Bottari, a Florentine, associated with the interests of the Jansenists in Rome.⁴⁹ Through the 1730s Grimaldi implored Bottari to remove the official censure placed on his books, but in this he was unsuccessful. Grimaldi still had hope that if he could get a new reading from Rome, permission to print would be granted him.⁵⁰ Such approval could not be arranged.

Doria's Flight from Descartes

While I think we must admit that Vico's response to the fate of these Cartesian works was ambiguous that of Doria was clear. Ear-

⁴⁷ The final pages of Grimaldi's *Memorie* contain the letters he wrote defending his work seeking its exoneration.

⁴⁸ This entire episode is recounted in Costantino Grimaldi, *Memorie di un anticurialista del Settecento*.

⁴⁹ Hanns Gross, *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 277–282.

⁵⁰ Pasquale Sposato, *Le "Lettere provinciali" di Biagio Pascal e loro diffusione a Napoli durante la "rivoluzione intellettuale" della seconda metà del secolo XVII: Contributo alla storia del Giansenismo e del giurisdizionalismo nel Regno di Napoli* (Tivoli: Chicca, 1960), 72–101, esp. 85–88.

lier, Doria was enough of a Cartesian to accept the dedication of the 1713 Italian translation of Baillet's biography and account of Descartes' thought. But his mind had changed by the early 1720s. In 1724 Doria published his new philosophical manifesto *Discorsi critici filosofici* (Critical philosophical discourses).⁵¹ His introduction takes the form of an intellectual biography which describes Doria's own disenchantment with Descartes' thought. Given what we know of Doria's intellectual development we have to regard this as an imaginative reconstruction rather than a factual account. In the Preface he presents himself to be a beginner in his philosophic reading. That would place him in the 1690s, but the Doria in the story comes rapidly to conclusions that Doria the author didn't reach until the 1720s.

As Doria told the story, he decided that he wanted to study philosophy, something he had never done before. He was informed that Aristotle was an obscure writer and Plato a poet, but that if he wanted to read serious philosophy there was no better place to start than with Descartes' *Meditations*. He went out and picked up a copy; apparently he wasn't told the book was on the Index, or perhaps that made no difference to him or the bookseller. He was reading at home when just having finished the third meditation, he was called out on an errand. On his way he fell into conversation with an Epicurean, and Doria decided to tell him about the new ideas he had just been reading. The Epicurean remained unconvinced about the arguments that supposedly proved the existence of an immaterial substance. The Epicurean scoffed at such notions and asserted that even if such a substance existed, there was no way to connect it with the corporeal. Perturbed by his inability to persuade, Doria went home to write a dialogue on the subject. But language proved as recalcitrant as the Epicurean, for he just couldn't show how the existence of individual bodies and souls was a consequence of a universal mind. Doria then sought out a Cartesian who presented him with long chains of clear and distinct ideas but was astounded when Doria was unable to perceive the self-evidence of what was the last step in the argument. After trying to parry Doria's questions for a while, the Cartesian tossed his hands in the air and walked away.

Then a Stranger who had been observing their conversation walked up and praised Doria for having read and understood the author

⁵¹ Paolo Mattia Doria, *Discorsi critici filosofici intorno alla filosofia degl'antichi e moderni, in particolare intorno alla filosofia di R. des Cartes con un progetto di metafisica* (Venezia, 1724).

who grasped the essence of Cartesianism. Doria was a bit confused because he thought his problem was that he hadn't understood Descartes in the first place. The Stranger went on to explain the presuppositions of Doria's questions. Doria had intuited that mind and body were not distinct substances but that they were both modifications of one simple substance: this was the system of Spinoza, said the Stranger. Doria was appalled at this revelation; he had never read a word of that author but he knew he was a terrible atheist. Shaken and confused Doria went home. Then he realized what he had to do, since the doctrine of Spinoza was consistent with Cartesianism he must refute both of them. While Doria may have had conversations similar to the ones he describes, his actual transformation from accepting Descartes' methods to detesting them came through his reflections on mathematics and geometry.

We know that Doria talked with Shaftesbury, at least to some extent; but did he meet the other illustrious visitors of these years, Fardella and Berkeley? Michelangelo Fardella came to Naples in 1715; he was originally from Sicily, but had pursued a career in northern Italy. His reputation was as one of the leading Cartesian theorists of the day. In the late 1690s he engaged in controversy with Matteo Giorgio, a leading Aristotelian theorist; their debate was more of a pre-Leibniz-Clarke debate rather than a parallel to the Benedetti-Grimaldi controversy. He also wrote commentaries on St. Augustine, relating the Saint's work to Cartesian ideas. Fardella was interested in harmonizing Descartes' thought with a variety of rationalist strands of Italian philosophical writing. But when Fardella arrived in Naples he was ill and despite his international reputation, he seems to have had little contact with the life of the city. He died in 1718 at the age of 68.

George Berkeley spent his early 30s in Italy; he was there from late 1716 to 1720, in southern Italy in 1717 and 1718, and in Sicily for part of 1718 and 1719. In one of his notebooks Berkeley preserves a brief comment that Fardella was too much a sceptic for him. Berkeley doesn't indicate whether this was based on reading or personal conversation; it is possible he met with him in person. During his lengthy stay in Naples, Berkeley went to Valletta's library. He does not write much on Neapolitan scholars in his journal; but his impression was that in contrast to other regions of Italy not much intellectual activity was going on in Naples.⁵² In the museum of

⁵² George Berkeley, *Viaggio in Italia*, ed. Thomas Jessop and Mariapaola Fimiani

imagined conversations there must be one between Berkeley and Doria.⁵³ Both were on their way to developing a neo-Platonism of their own, and both were attempting to explain why contemporary mathematical theory was inadequate. But, it seems that they were not at points where they might have been of use to each other.

The Christian Lucretius and the Pagan one

In Sicily Berkeley came in contact with Tommaso Campailla, and later engaged in a short correspondance with him. Campailla must have been well worth the visit.⁵⁴ In 1709 he began what was to be his major work, a philosophic poem celebrating the aptitude of Descartes' physics to explain the origins of the world. Entitled *L'Adamo ovvero il mondo creato* (Adam or the creation of the World) the work was a complete account in twenty lengthy cantos of the creation of the heavens, the earth, plants, animals and humanity itself. The published work had a wide circulation, even outside Italy; a Latin translation of part of it was also produced. Campailla liked to consider his accomplishment as if it was the work of a modern Empedocles or a Christian Lucretius. Campailla's work may be best understood as a Cartesian rewriting of Tasso's *Le sette giornate* (The Seven Days), an account of the creation of the world. Prior to publishing the completed poem in 1729, he had already published collections of essays dealing with problems of physics. In 1738 he published several attacks on Newtonian physics; he defended the corpuscular theories developed by Descartes. Campailla continued the *Investiganti* reliance on experiment that had been associated with Cornelio, Di Capoa and Porzio.

I have found no evidence that Vico read Campailla, but there is one tantalizing passage that might suggest he knew the poem. In one of Vico's genuinely bizarre passages of the Second and Third *Scienza*

(Napoli: Bibliopolis, 1979), p. 242. The editor notes with amazement that the only edition of Berkeley's writings on Italy is this Italian edition.

⁵³ Doria was disappointed in Berkeley's work and found his claims to be an opponent of Locke merely superficial; in Doria's *Difesa della metafisica degli antichi filosofi contro il signor Giovanni Locke*, "Brevi considerazioni . . . intorno al libro del signor Giorgio Berkeley 'Saggio d'una nuova teoria della visione'" (Venzia (probably Naples), 1732-33), 2, 248-70.

⁵⁴ Paolo Cristofolini, "Campailla, Tommaso" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 17, 324-328.

nuova he proposes what he regards as a physical explanation of the appearance of Giants on the earth after Noah's Flood. He imagines that mothers, wandering alone in the forests, would gradually lose the inclination to care for their young and would deposit their babes in the mud and walk off.⁵⁵ These children, rolling in their own excrement, would create a powerful fertilizer from which they might grow strong. In earlier formulations of this idea Vico had noted that these giants might not be too cleanly, but the whole business of nitrous salts was not part of his explanation. In his poem of 1729 Campailla describes how nitrous salts combining with fertile and moist earth would create an ideal situation for growth.⁵⁶ To be sure there are no Giants or errant mothers in Campailla, but he does provide a physical explanation of the problem Vico wanted to describe. Vico could have found sources in texts on chemistry and alchemy that provided similar explanations. But this doesn't seem to have been typical of Vico's reading. Vico's fanciful hypothesis only appears after the Campailla poem had been printed and we do know that Vico read contemporary poetry.

The most controversial book which seems to have been published in Naples at this time was Alessandro Marchetti's translation of Lucretius. He had finished his translation in 1668, but ecclesiastical interference and censorship blocked all attempts to print it, though the work circulated widely in manuscript. Serafino Biscardi was the first to bring a copy to Naples; this was in the 1670s. Francesco D'Andrea quoted substantial portions from it in his manuscript defenses of Di Capua. Marchetti's death in 1714 opened the way for its publication. When official approval was denied, the only alternative was an illicit edition. The title page claims it was printed in London by John Pickard (Giovanni Pickard); it is not impossible that the work was published in London, but the circumstantial evidence that would make this likely has not been found. The publication

⁵⁵ G. Vico, *Opere filosofiche, Scienza Nuova*, p. 473 (# 369). Giants before Noah's Flood, according to Genesis, were the product of the mating of the sons of God with the daughters of men. Vico's hypothesis, or physical proof, explains the reappearance of giants after the Flood without requiring that Noah be a giant, or that some giants had survived the Flood without God's aid. On this see, Walter E. Stephens, "De historia gigantum: theological anthropology before Rabelais", *Traditio*, (1984), 40, 43-89. Despite the title the article considers seventeenth century interpretations and particular that of Augustin Calmet.

⁵⁶ Tommaso Campailla, *L'Adamo, ovvero il mondo creato* (Milano: Cairolo, 1757), p. 210 (Canto 7, # 15).

follows the pattern of other projects undertaken by Ciccarelli.⁵⁷ Campailla's work was popularization on two levels; one was to express in verse the system of Descartes, the other was to show that an Epicurean philosophy could be made compatible with Christianity. The Lucretius translation, on the other hand, was Epicureanism without the Christianity.

Popular History and Almanacs

Perhaps the most impressive attempt at popularization during these years was a remarkable book of Giacinto Gimma published at the end of 1723. This was his *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata* (Design for an History of Italian Letters), published by Felice Mosca in Naples.⁵⁸ He began with Eden and Noah's Flood and brought the story up to the present. It was a summary of all the accomplishments of Italians in the arts and letters. Arranged in chronological order, it summarized scholarly debate on certain controversial issues and concluded with a summary of the state of Italian culture in the early eighteenth century. This project would have been almost impossible to accomplish without the scholarship of the *Giornale de'letterati d'Italia*; the journal itself was one of his most frequently cited sources. Gimma's major methodological model was the work of a French historian Pierre Vallemont.⁵⁹ Vallemont's work was first translated into Italian in 1700 and published in Venice; by 1738 five Italian editions had appeared. The Italian title of his work was *Gli elementi della storia ovvero ciò che sapere della cronologia, della geografia, del blasone, della storia universale, delle monarchie antiche, e delle monarchie novelle* (The elements of history, or what you need to know about chronology, geography, coats of arms, universal history, and ancient and modern monarchies). The Italian translation is interesting to study because one can see right off that some terms that sound odd to modern readers of Vico were actually

⁵⁷ On Marchetti's translation see Mario Saccenti, *Lucrezio in Toscana: Studio su Alessandro Marchetti* (Firenze: Olschki, 1966), 103–5 and generally, Parts I and II. In the Naples publication see Raffaele Ajello, "Cartesianismo e cultura oltremontana", in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, 141–143.

⁵⁸ Vincenzo Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione*, 474–478.

⁵⁹ Carlo Borghero, *La certezza e la storia: Cartesianismo, pittonismo e conoscenza storica* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1983), 303, note 26. On the English translation of this work by Thomas Hearne, see Joseph Levine, *The Battle of the Books*, 271–2, 287.

common ways of expressing concepts of historiographical practice.

Gimma's approach to his subject was simple. First he believed that Adam had possessed the highest form of human wisdom. At later times certain special individuals knew or had special access to these fundamental truths. Even in the most barbaric times, it seemed, genuine wisdom and esoteric truths were preserved. Like Vallemont, he was quite willing to make use of Scripture to provide information and explain what had been left out of pagan records. And he used pagan traditions to clarify Sacred history. Gimma, given the nature of his approach, was forced many times to consider priority disputes. His rule of thumb was that Italians were always first and led the way in innovations of style, discoveries and inventions. Gimma summarized developments in a field and on occasion would suggest directions for future investigations. In the last part of his book he presents what he sees to be the central themes of modern Italian culture. He believed its most vital elements derived from the Galilean scientific tradition, and relied on the experimental method and explanations based on the atomic hypothesis. Descartes, Gassendi and Cornelio, along with Galileo and the Copernican system were key parts to the development of his intellectual world. Gimma's book was deemed orthodox and was given no trouble in its publication.

While Vico makes no acknowledgement of using Gimma as a source, bits of Vico's curious erudition can be traced to this work. I will limit myself to one example. In *Scienza Nuova* Vico notes in passing that originally the symbol of the French monarchy was three toads, this was later changed to three lillies. Vico made a similar observation in the first edition of *Scienza nuova*; such an observation does not appear in what would be a parallel passage in *Il dritto universale*.⁶⁰ It is possible that Vico got a hold of a copy of Claude Fauchet's 1610 *Origines des chevaliers, armoiries et héraux*, book 1, chapter 2.⁶¹ But the more likely scenario was that he came across the lillies-toads controversy in Gimma's discussion as to whether sailors of Amalphi held the priority on the discovery of the compass.

Gimma's aim with this project was similar in theme to the Spenserati academy he had founded at Rossano at the beginning of the

⁶⁰ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche, Scienza nuova prima*, p. 287; *Scienza nuova*, p. 532 (# 535).

⁶¹ Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. J.E. Anderson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), p. 135 and 350.

century. Both aimed at increasing the prestige of Italian thinkers by promoting the unity of Italian letters. His book was a fabulous ragbag of off-beat learning, facts, and stories arranged more or less chronologically. While Gimma was on occasion critical of a source, his account is full of enough legendary material to certify this history as an example academic popular culture. Gimma thought of his work as a compendium or encyclopedia of Italian letters. His compilation described Italian written culture from the point of view of universal history. Among its aims was the desire to chart a continuous secular history of letters. While there may be interrelations between secular and sacred literatures, it was possible to write a history of the topic separate from ecclesiastical concerns. Hence, Gimma reviewed the controversy concerning the Immaculate Conception, and listed the thorns that could be found in Italy taken from Christ's Crown of Thorns, and he distinguished those that bled on Good Friday from those that did not. These essays are examples of an historical, that is non-theological, investigation of a sacred subject.

The appearance of Gimma's book indicates what might be called a growing historical consciousness, an interest in origins and of the future of Italian literature. Works like Gimma's must have served a useful function for the many readers who would not have had access to a library containing the range of authors he referred to. This interest among the lettered elite in understanding their present in terms of a long historical tradition can be juxtaposed with a more popular form of publishing, the almanac. While a work like Gimma's would tell the academic where they fitted on the intellectual map, an almanac would show the less sophisticated reader how they were connected with other kinds of communities and interests. For someone new to reading, or with minimal reading skills, the almanac could be a source of otherwise inaccessible information. Not only could one find information on the motions of the heavenly bodies, there would be summaries of world history, contemporary news, lists of members of noble families, information on mail delivery and handy advice on the proper modes of address when approaching a noble or public official.

Almanacs were not new in Naples in the eighteenth century. In the middle of the seventeenth century Rutilio Benincasa and Ottavio Beltrano regularly issued a work they called *Almanacco perpetuo*. The publishers of the ones of this time began publication in the 1720s. In 1721 the printer Francesco Ricciardi issued one with the title

Discorso istorico dell cose più rimarcabili seguite in Europa dall'Anno 1697. per tutto Dicembre 1720. L'almanacco universale . . . (Historical Discourse on the most remarkable events that have happened in Europe from 1697 up to December 1720. The Universal almanac . . .). The title continued with a summary of the contents. These publications contain regular features like astronomical information, lists of sovereigns in Europe, and the holders of major offices in Naples. There was also practical information like the proper form of address to be used when speaking to various members of the nobility and ecclesiastical hierarchy, and the weekly schedule for letter delivery to major European cities. Some volumes discussed the planetary system and the model used was still the Tychonian one. Urban life had reached new levels of complexity and the less sophisticated needed to know how to handle certain kinds of public transactions, like writing letters, or wanted easy access to certain historical facts. The older networks that had spread this kind of information were now being supplemented by a source that would be open to all.

Ricciardi published an annual almanac through the middle 1730s. Typically they would contain astrological predictions, a play or dialogue in Neapolitan dialect, summaries of recent news events and a list of dates concerning universal history. In the 1721 almanac events are dated as to how many years had passed since the event. Hence Christ had been born 1721 years ago; it had been 5661 years since the creation of the world; 3714 since Noah's Flood. 281 years ago printing had been invented; it was 241 years since the first musket and 37 years since the last siege of Vienna. In his 1723 almanac Ricciardi adopted another date for the creation of the world, making it 7357 years ago; this placed the Flood 5101 years back. The 1721 volume placed creation at 3939 BC, a date supported by John More; two years later Ricciardi was claiming 5633 BC, a date 200+ years even beyond Vossius' calculation based on the Septuagint.⁶²

In the 1726 *Discorso storico*, Ricciardi includes a short essay explaining chronology, and specifically the BC/AD dating system. For this year he listed events computed in terms of years from the present, he also had a section of dates using the BC/AD system. This shift

⁶² C.A. Patrides, *Premises and Motifs in Renaissance Thought and Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 55–57. Paolo Rossi, *The dark abyss of time: the history of the earth & the history of nations from Hooke to Vico*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University Chicago Press, 1984), 146.

indicated a profound change in attitude towards time and its representation. The "years since" approach gave a clear point of reference, but there was nothing constant about the system; every year it would change. It gave no regard to the future, but it did facilitate certain kinds of calculations; one could easily determine, say, the number of years from the Tower of Babel to the invention of printing. Unlike the BC/AD system it did not emphasize the idea of measuring time as an abstract concept, it was always the number of years between one point of time and another. The BC/AD system moved the center of measurement from the present to the birth of Christ, and it also, in a less ambiguous manner indicated the potentially infinite span of time before Christ's birth and after it.

Vico strongly disagreed with this new method and his opposition is evident in the last two editions of *Scienza nuova*. The first edition of 1725 contained no chronological table; it was only added after Ricciardi's advocacy of the BC/AD system. Vico used three different chronologies, that of years since creation, the Olympiads, and years since the founding of Rome. Vico preferred these separate chronologies because they further emphasized the isolation of the primitive nations. And, the purpose of his Table was to show the unreliability of all chronological systems. Given that Vico believed that all dynamic social change was brought about by the revolutions of the poor and the disenfranchised, it is perhaps not surprising that Vico might be interested in correcting the opinions of readers of almanacs. We are fairly accepting of the kind of argument I made about Vico's possible borrowings from Gimma. It is another thing to assert that Vico's reason for inserting the Chronological Table came from conversations with almanac readers. Nevertheless this may be considered the kind of unrecorded dialogue that took place between authors with the many readers who never responded to what they read by putting pen to paper.

Time of Troubles

The first years of Austrian rule after the initial flurry of activity was not punctuated by the kinds of crises that had been part of the last 20 years of Spanish rule. Boccaccio, Galileo, Descartes and Lucretius could be published or sold openly. This atmosphere of apparent toleration made the harsh persecution of Giannone in 1723 and then

of Grimaldi unexpected in this context. But there were also signs of unease in the city and a desire for reassurance and protection. There was a marked increase in the number of denunciations made to the Inquisition which reach their high point in the decade of the 1720s. The only period comparable to that of 1710–1729 was the troublesome decades of Masaniello's revolt and the great plague of 1640–1659.⁶³

The crowded condition of the Inquisitorial prisons was noted by the traveller Michel Guyot de Merville in the summer of 1720 in his *Voyage historique d'Italie*. But besides this side of Naples' life, he came into contact with a libertine group—if his story is accepted as true. He does not seem to have direct contact with them, but his account is full of interesting circumstantial detail. He asserted that a defrocked Spanish monk named Aliprand Narvaez had established a new religion devoted to pleasures of all kinds. Certain aspects of Christ's teaching were accepted, but, for the most part the authors of the Gospels had distorted Christ's words. Doctrines such as the Trinity and all aspects of institutional religion were errors. The beliefs of this sect were printed in 1719 by Michel Lippa at Naples with the title "The Microscope of Religion". The meetings of the converts were kept secret using the pretense that they had gathered to play music together. The group was exposed when one of its members foolishly dropped a copy of "The Microscope" in the street which was, by chance, picked up by a priest. Guyot de Merville also recorded the rumor that Neapolitan Catholics, not Protestants or other heretics, were responsible for composing satires such as "Nipotismo di Roma", "Ambasciate di Romolo a Romani" and "Vaticani Languenti".⁶⁴ "The Microscope" has left no other trace, and I have been unable to identify the publisher. The Inquisitorial records for Naples in this period are very good, but there is no mention of this case. Given the source, it seems safe to presume that he was relaying at least gossip rather than his own fantasy.

Another sign of growing anxiety might be that in 1719 Naples added a new patron saint among its protectors, St. Irene.⁶⁵ Irene's particular strength was her ability to ward off lightning, as is repre-

⁶³ Jean-Michel Sallmann, *Chercheurs de trésors et jeteuses de sorts: la quête du surnaturel à Naples au xvii^e siècle* (Paris: Aubier, 1986), pp. 71–72, and Table 2, p. 225.

⁶⁴ Michel Guyot de Merville, *Voyage historique d'Italie* (La Haye: M.G. de Merville, 1729), 2, 244, 246–260, 311.

⁶⁵ Jean-Michel Sallmann, "Image et fonction du saint dans la région de Naples à la fin du xvii^e et au début du xviii^e siècle", *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* (1979),

sented in a magnificent silver sculpture by Carlo Schisano. He represented a hardworking putto carrying a model of the city while Irene blocks a lightening bolt with her hand. James Joyce, whose intuitions and statements about Vico have an uncanny truth about them noted to Harriet S. Weaver, editor of the *Egoist* and a promoter of Joyce's work, in 1926 "I wonder where Vico got his fear of thunderstorms. It is almost unknown to the male Italians I have met".⁶⁶ Joyce may have been right to project this fear to Vico, though Vico had only affirmed it of the cyclopeses. In response to it the cyclopeses resolved to only have intercourse with their women in the privacy of their caves. It is not unlikely that Joyce is correct about Vico; though a literary source for the relationship between lightening and sexual intercourse would be Plutarch's life of Marcus Cato. Cato, so he is reported, never had sex with his wife unless it thundered; as for himself, Cato allowed he was happy when it thundered.⁶⁷

91, 827-74, contains a fascinating description of the process of achieving sainthood during these years. See also, Jean-Michel Sallman, "Il santo e le rappresentazioni della santità. Problemi di metodo", *Quaderni storici* (1979), 41, 584-602; and, Giuseppe Galasso, *L'altra Europa: Per un'antropologia storica del Mezzogiorno d'Italia* (Milano: Mondadori, 1982), 82-93.

⁶⁶ James Joyce, *Letters*, ed. Stuart Gilbert (NY: Viking, 1957), 241.

⁶⁷ Plutarch, *Parallel Lives* "Cato the Elder", 17.7. This possible source for Vico's notion of the cyclopeses seizing their wives out of fear of thunder and lightning, I believe, was not noted by Nicolini.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE NEW STYLE OF VINCI AND THE NEW SCIENCE OF VICO

According to Charles Burney, in the last volume of his *A General History of Music* published in 1789, Leonardo Vinci brought about a revolution in opera in the middle 1720s.¹ Vinci, a Neapolitan opera composer had restored the clarity and intelligibility of recitative to the pristine form of that of Peri to whom Burney attributed the first opera recitative. More importantly, Vinci's arias allowed the poetry a voice without impoverishing the music. This was a bold judgement given the evidence available to him, but one that indicated his grasp of the Italian musical scene. In general, in Burney's view, opera, especially that of Naples, reached a period of excellence from about 1725 to 1740: there was a conjuncture of the achievements of composers, librettists, singers and stage designers.² Vinci began his career writing music for Neapolitan comic opera. After a number of triumphs in this genre, he wrote his first *opera seria*, *Publio Cornelio Scipio*, which was quite a hit in Naples; his 1726 setting of *Didone abbandonata* gave him a European reputation; his *Artaserse* of 1730, his last work, was one of the most popular operas of the first half of the eighteenth century.³ He died in mysterious circumstances that may have been related to his excessive passion for gambling. His early death, followed by that of his fellow composer Pergolesi a few years later became the eighteenth century's examples of the tragedy of unfulfilled genius until the career of Mozart displaced them both.

The poet of the *Didone* and the *Artaserse* was the greatest librettist of the age, Pietro Metastasio, the pupil and heir of Gravina. The lives of Metastasio and Vinci exemplify aspects of the kind of rags to

¹ Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, 2, 916–917.

² David Kimbell, *Italian opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 190–198.

³ Reinhard Strohm, *Essays on Handel and Italian Opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 213. Robert Meikle, "Vinci, Leonardo" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 19, 785–787; and Kurt Markstrom, "Vinci, Leonardo", *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, 4, 1013–1016.

riches and fame that made a musical career in Naples seductive. The story of Metastasio is well known; snatched from the slums of Rome by Gravina, who heard him singing improvised poetry, he adopted this Pietro Trapassi, educated him, and changed his name to "Metastasio", which might be fittingly translated as "The Transformer". Gravina, to whom posterity has not been kind, has even been ridiculed for this relationship; but whatever else it was, it showed remarkable prescience to identify genius in this urchin. On Gravina's death Metastasio inherited his fortune; and, being no Horatio Alger figure he squandered the money on wild living and opera stars. To be sure he wrote poetry for Naples' memorial volumes, but that was not enough to support his sort of life style. He had lacked the discipline needed for a law degree; and by 1724 the prospect of work was staring him in the face. It was under the influence of the soprano Marianna Bulgarelli, also known as "La Romanina", that he wrote his first opera, *Didone abbandonata* (Abandoned Dido). She was the first Didone, and persuaded him to give her the final number in each act, a revolutionary innovation breaking the typical aria pattern in the *opera seria* tradition. This opera was the beginning of his remarkable career as a librettist. Naples had its own expectations for a production; an opera had to include parts for comic characters and usually they were sung in Neapolitan. These scenes were cut when *Didone* was not performed in Naples and consequently the only bass voice in the work was removed from the score. In Rome there was the further stipulation that women could not perform in public. All singing roles were performed by men.⁴ In the Roman production of *Didone abbandonata* the parts of Dido and Aeneas were both sung by castrati.⁵ In 1730 Metastasio went to Vienna to take on the post of Caesarean Poet, and the special patronage of another Marianna, the Countess of Althann. He lived there until his death in 1782, having had a full and active career.

⁴ Gender studies, to my knowledge, have not dealt with the symbolic significance of castrati for this period. Roland Barthers' *S/Z* is a partial exception. See Rudolfo Celletti, *A history of bel canto*, trans. Frederick Fuller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 108–115; John Rosselli, *Singers of Italian opera: the history of a profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 32–55. Anne Rice's novel *Cry to Heaven* is a sympathetic presentation of the life of a castrato in eighteenth century Venice and Naples.

⁵ It may be mere coincidence but it is only after this Roman production that made both Vinci and Metastasio's reputation that Vico came up with his hypothesis that Dido was in fact a man, or at least a poetic universal representing men defeated in an heroic contest. Vico had mentioned the stories concerning Dido and Aeneas

Vinci's antecedents were poor, and certainly obscure. He was born between 1690 and 1696; the earlier date would make him comparatively old when he began his career as a composer, 1696 would give him a more routine career path. He came to Naples for training at the conservatory called *Poveri di Gesù Cristo*; there were four such conservatories in the city and they provided instruction for male musicians. As with any thriving center of cultural production and education, Naples produced more musicians than it could employ. Given the quality of their training and the reputation of the teachers it is not surprising that many were able to get jobs in northern Italy and in Europe. Francesco Araia, for example, made a start as a composer of comic opera in Naples in 1729, wrote heroic opera in Rome, but after 1735 spent most of his career in St. Petersburg where he set the first opera written in Russian. A lucky few were able to market the cachet of approval from another center as the way to be called back to a prestigious post in Naples. This was what happened to Vinci. After his initial success in Naples, he was to find commissions in Rome and Venice and then got a position in the royal chapel in Naples.

If we compare the lives of musicians in the 1720s to those in the first decade of the century, it appears that employment had become more flexible. Scarlatti's ventures in Venice, Florence and Rome of 1702–1708 seem carefully planned in comparison to the Vinci who readily moved from one place to another. Nicola Porpora, Leonardo Leo, Giuseppe Porsile and Francesco Feo, just to mention composers, had quite successful careers outside of Naples. The Viennese connection was quite an important source of patronage for Neapolitans. Handel's travels in Italy were determined and funded by aristocratic patrons; but Adolf Hasse, another Saxon, seemed confident enough of steady employment that he went to Naples in 1724 without such external funding. He wrote for the opera houses of the city and made an occasional trip to Venice. In 1731 he returned to Germany, though he would still regularly visit Italy until the mid 1740s. But it was the great castrati from the Neapolitan conservatories who had the most international success, the most artistic independence, and made the most money. Gaetano Majorano (Caffarelli), Carlo Broschi (Farinelli) and Gioacchino Conti (Gizziello) sang not

in *De uno* and the 1725 *Scienza nuova*; the idea of the male Dido doesn't appear until the 1730 *Scienza nuova*.

only in Italy and Vienna but also spent a significant amount of time in London, the city that paid the biggest salaries.⁶

Vinci's music had an immediate popularity and the language used to praise and compare it with its predecessors indicates a change in taste and in the rhetoric of criticism. The fugue, counterpoint, and complex harmonies were all regarded as the lifeless ornaments of an empty tradition, such was the language used. What pieces and composers did they have in mind? It is true that when Scarlatti returned to Naples in 1709 there were some complaints about the difficulties of his style. The source of these remarks was a letter of April, 1709 by an impoverished cavalier but successful impressario, Count Francesco Maria Zambeccari. It is impossible to tell if his complaints represent an aesthetic judgement or the griping that goes along with having to work with and for a very successful artist. But, whatever it represented, Scarlatti continued not only to write but to get commissions from the most prestigious patrons. Some of Scarlatti's last operas rank among his best, *Tigrane* was performed in Naples in 1715; the *Telemaco* (1718), *Marco Attilio Regolo* (1719), and *Griselda* (1721) were all written for Rome. Scarlatti wrote chamber cantatas for the Austrian viceroy until his death in 1725. His last publicly performed new work featured the magnificent castrato Farinelli, and Roberto Pagano has suggested, the first text Metastasio wrote for music.⁷ In these last works were remarkable experiments in harmonic modulation; and Scarlatti's gift for creating interesting, fresh melodies seemed unabated. These last works were written for a select and learned audience; Vinci's compositions were for the opera public.

It is, perhaps, foolish to speculate on what these advocates of Vinci's music were actually hearing, reading or remembering. What is clear is that they perceived Vinci as something new, and they connected this with a greater emphasis on the poetry. Lacking the vocabulary of the yet-to-be-created science of aesthetics, critics understood their pleasure in moral terms. This interpretation received corroboration from the librettos of Metastasio. His librettos were edifying, but what was challenging about them was the limited number of virtues explored and defended. His characters struggle with the tension between public virtue embedded in public ceremony and the impulse of the private

⁶ John Rosselli, *Singers of Italian opera: the history of a profession*, 32–55.

⁷ Roberto Pagano, *Scarlatti*, p. 371; he first proposed this in *Alessandro Scarlatti*, p. 232.

person whether motivated by virtue or vice. Vinci's music highlighted the pathos of this tension with the beauty of an apparent simplicity. The language his contemporaries used to describe his revolution or reform was in accordance with baroque values; in an instant the heaviness of the previous style was done away with by Vinci's startling simplicity. Robert Meikle has attempted to give a more precise explanation of the Vinci revolution. He compared what he called a typical Scarlatti aria with one of Vinci. By focusing on their use of melody he concluded that while Scarlatti seemed to draw the aria out from the melody, Vinci shaped his arias around what Meikle called "fragments" of melodies.⁸ A Vinci aria tended to be longer than those of Scarlatti and his use of these melodic fragments allowed him to build larger musical forms, which, at the same time, did not sound complex to the listener.

On the face of it, it is surprising that more has not been made of this new style of song writing and the similarities to Vico's new theories about poetry and singing. To be sure Vico's prose has been called baroque and his writing has moments of high emotional intensity that might be compared to that of the aria. But, specifically, the comparison to Vinci, whose music heightened the meaning of poetic speech, suggests Amphion, Orpheus, or Appius singing the laws to the Plebeians. The clashes Vico described in the Heroic city have more in common with the display of an opera singer than the tumults of street fighting. Vico represented these clashes as taking place on the level of symbolism and performance rather than as calculations based on power and interest. His analysis relies on the operatic convention that passion finds its natural expression in song. The dominate form of baroque song was the *da capo* aria whose antithetical structure represents the kind of perturbed and conflicted state of mind Vico imagined in his men who lived in the Age of Gods and Heroes.

At one time it was thought that the *da capo* form was a Neapolitan product. In 1763 John Brown in his *Dissertation on the Rise, Union and Power of Poetry and Music* made the claim that the use of the *da capo* aria as the dominant form in opera was the work of Alessandro

⁸ Robert Burns Meikle, "Leonardo Vinci's *Artaserse*, an edition, with editorial and critical commentary" Dissertation, Cornell University, 1970, vol. 1, 408-429. He argues that Vinci's use of melody points to that of Mozart. See also, Rodolfo Celletti, *A history of bel canto*, 74-76.

Scarlatti in the 1690s.⁹ The story was spread by others until Charles Burney, who reviewed the evidence in 1789, felt the need to refute the claim that Alessandro Scarlatti had invented it.¹⁰ Scarlatti, we know, wasn't the first to use this form; examples can readily be found much earlier, but what is curious is that writers in Northern Europe could imagine Naples as its source. While Scarlatti did not create the *da capo* aria, his opera overtures with their fast, slow, fast sections became a standard pattern; this structure was developed later in the classical symphony.¹¹ Certainly Scarlatti contributed to its popularity for he wrote over 100 operas and more than 600 cantatas in which this was the dominate solo voice song form. Indeed, it was such a common place that he could use its absence for great dramatic effect in his 1695 oratorio *La Giuditta* (Judith). In the recitative and aria preceeding Judith's beheading of Holofernes, Judith lulls Holofernes to sleep with a doom ridden lullaby which she says is a song of her people. The syncopated rhythm has an edge of terror and doom that depresses him; his last words, spoken just before her aria, are a passage of rich chromaticism which mark his descent into a slumber of death. Judith's aria repeats the syncopated rhythm from the recitative, this time with the accompaniment of two flutes. A second section follows but there is no return to the first theme; in the following recitative Judith says she is cutting it short to get to her real business of beheading Holofernes. Then there is a rather graphic continuo portrayal of this deed. Given the ubiquity of the *da capo* form, its absence here is marked, and focuses dramatic attention on the real head (*capo*) that was cut off. Scarlatti seems to be giving back some life to an art form that ran the danger of merely being routine. The absence of the expected return is doubly felt and serves as a way of invigorating the *da capo* aria within its own tradition.

⁹ John Brown, *A Dissertation on the Rise, Union, and Power, the Progressions, Separations, and Corruptions of Poetry and Music* (London: L. Davis and C. Reymers, 1763), p. 205 (footnote "t"). Donald Jay Grout, *Alessandro Scarlatti: An Introduction to his Operas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 111; Grout traces the story that Scarlatti invented the *da capo* aria to Brown. Brown's reflections on the union of the ancient legislator and the bard, on how poetry and music can be effectively rejoined, and why the Homeric epic cannot be recreated in modern times, points to the Ossian controversy and shares ideas developed by Vico. Brown seems not to have known Vico's work; the translator of the Italian edition (1772), Pietro Crocchi, makes no mention of Vico in his notes and comments on Brown's text.

¹⁰ Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, ed. Frank Mercer (NY: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935), v. 2, p. 601.

¹¹ Michael Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan opera*, 100–104, 167–174.

Certain aspects of the *da capo* structure had obvious advantages. It was an excellent teaching device of the well-tempered key system that was coming to dominate the composition of new music at this time. Each aria could serve a little lesson on the relationship of keys and their relative minors and majors. There was the pleasure of increased familiarity when the first melody returned and for the attentive listener an affirmation of the first melody was modified by a silent recollection of the second one. Vico adapted such a form to reflect his conception of the way conflict was experienced in archaic times. The Heroes did not have the imaginative capacity to understand Plebeian concerns, they could only conceive them as contrast, and their response to them was to restate their initial position.

Baroque performance practice, of course, did not simply echo the first section and was no simple, "artless" or natural repetition. It gave the performers a chance to change and embellish the melodic line, and these kinds of improvisations would probably vary each time it was sung. The aria form itself gave emphasis to the singer's performance and probably accounts, in part, for why it was not unusual for patrons to attend the same opera several times over. The effect of these creative restatements, relying on contemporary accounts, was inspirational, even incantatory for the audience. In an age of great singers the castrati were recognized as the greatest interpreters. Farinelli, the stage name for Carlo Broschi (1705–1782) has a claim to be the greatest singer of all time.¹² Judging by the descriptions of performances it would not be an exaggeration to regard the castrati of exercising the kind of power that the renaissance magus tried to actualize and control.¹³ Their impact on those who heard them was profound and their performances accomplished marvelous transformations among their audience. Such descriptions make more credible Vico's claims for his heroic singers, the Arcadian belief in the latent powers of poetry and, the ready acceptance that an Ossian could inspire a people.

¹² David Kimbell, *Italian Opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 210–214.

¹³ Ioan Couliano, *Eros and Magic in the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 102–106. Gravina, on a different matter wrote: "Omero perciò è il mago più potente e l'incantatore più sagace, poichè si serve della parole, non tanto a compiacenza degli orecchi, quanto ad uso dell'immaginazione e della cosa, volgendo tutta la industria all'espressione del naturale." Gianvincenzo Gravina, *Scritti critici e teorici*, ed. Amedeo Quondam (Bari: Laterza, 1973), 203.

The *da capo* form has proved an easy target especially for those who want verisimilitude in their opera plots. What sense did it make for the character to repeat the same emotional statement twice? In its defense it has been noted that the *da capo* opera aria usually preceded the character's exit, hence returning to the sentiments that prompted the actor to prepare to run off stage could offer dramatic motivation for that action. For Vico, the repetitiveness of the form fitted very well with the inflexibility he sought to portray in the minds of the first people. Furthermore, the restricted emotional range expressed by baroque opera fitted well with the passions he attributed to early humanity. Opera repeated the ideology that shaped the baroque court. According to Matteo Pellegrini, writing in the early seventeenth century, one aim of the ruler was to keep his courtiers anxious and attentive by his contrasting use of the emotions of fear and hope. Ivan Nagel's assertion that "All expression in *opera seria* derives from the two gestures of menace and entreaty" suggests how this limitation of emotional range acquired its special dramatic function in this cultural world.¹⁴ This contrast can also summarize the exchanges between the patricians and plebeians, or the giant who enslaves his woman and then subdues the outlaws but begs mercy from the thundering Jove.

Vico's Scienza nuova and the System of Patronage at Naples

As with most of Vico's major achievements, the origins of the first edition of *Scienza nuova* are covered in an obscure darkness. Some of its development can be inferred from Vico's interaction with the patronage networks in Naples. In 1721, as part of a volume celebrating a marriage between the Filomarino and Caracciolo family, Vico wrote *Giunone in Danza* (Juno Dancing) which presents his theory of mythology and of primitive poetry in verse. He asserted here that the first speech of primitive people was expressed in song and that poetry was in the beginning of history the natural speech of all nations. *Giunone in danza* was, in several respects, an odd work; not only did he use the poem to present his own ideas he made mention of almost all the other participants in the volume as well. I have found

¹⁴ Ivan Nagel, *Autonomy and Mercy: Reflections on Mozart's Operas*, trans. Marion Faber and Ivan Nagel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 3.

no other example of an author using these volumes of occasional poetry as an opportunity to develop their research ideas; even authors who in other contexts would present their ideas in verse do not attempt this. Vico honored the marriage and the cultural community that that event supported. And, at least the persona that he adopts, claims that this production and the intellectual creativity of the Neapolitans who joined him was only possible because of the noble families being linked in holy matrimony. This is in marked contrast to the natural independence of the first poets whose verse Vico believed was compelled from them as if by natural necessity.

In 1723, on a similar theme, he wrote a history of poetry in a work celebrating a member of the Della Torre family. Already in *Il dritto universale* Vico had presented this theory, at least certain key elements of it.¹⁵ But the reasons for, and a prose argument as to why Vico believed that the first language of humanity was expressed in human speech were presented in the *Scienza nuova* of 1725. It can be presumed that this theory also had a place in Vico's first draft of *Scienza nuova*, a work which is now lost, known as the *Scienza nuova negativa*. The story of the "negative" *Scienza nuova* is well known but it is worth mentioning in the context of these commissioned poetic works. Around this time, though the actual date is uncertain, Vico made a significant breakthrough by his acquisition of a patron with connections on the international scene, Cardinal Lorenzo Corsini. Previously Vico's patrons had been Neapolitan lawyers and literati. The *Giunone* may have been an advertisement for patronage; Vico's reaction to gaining Corsini's interest seems to have been to prepare a new work worthy of the Cardinal.

Confident of financial support to defray the publishing costs, Vico wrote to his heart's content and he claimed that the final product would have filled two sizeable quarto volumes. Given what we know of Vico there seems no reason to doubt that he was capable of writing an overlong, formless treatise. His initial impulse was to add and elaborate rather than rethink from scratch. Fortunately he was forced abandon that draft and adopt an entirely new structure. The expected patronage to subsidize publication proved unavailable, so Vico immediately chose to recast the entire work, reducing it to a smaller format and to an expense he could afford. This was all to the good for

¹⁵ Vico, *Opere giuridiche*, (Book 1, chapter 183), p. 265.

he seems to have done his best work writing for a deadline. Vico realized that such patronage as Corsini was too valuable to reject despite the absence of significant financial support. Corsini also received the honor of the dedication of the second *Scienza nuova*, and Vico's wisdom on this matter was born out when Corsini was elected pope. The international status of his patron, it would seem, gave Vico the confidence to prepare a work not simply for a local Neapolitan audience but for the learned academies of all of Europe.

Vico parallels the patronage of Corsini with the recognition afforded his *Il diritto universale* by Jean Le Clerc. Vico in the first edition of *Scienza nuova* made explicit reference to this article by Le Clerc; in his Autobiography he reproduces a translation of the letter Le Clerc had sent him. Not only were his ideas accepted by a noted international religious leader, they were praised by a Protestant intellectual. This combination of support from leaders of the Catholic and the Protestant world was further evidence of the impartial, scientific character of Vico's research. But, unfortunately for Vico, the age of the erudite general readers represented by Le Clerc was vanishing.

This account of the genesis of *Scienza nuova* reveals some remarkable circumstances about Vico's relation to its system of patronage. One begins to think he believed that his inspiration was in fact dependent on the noble patrons who supported these works. Modern readers and commentators of Vico attempt to justify his subservience to this patronage system as a means to avoid trouble and poverty. But Vico, as far as I can see, never indicated he felt degraded or had hesitations about serving such masters. In 1724, in an oration mourning the death of the mother of Naples' viceroy, Anna Aspermont, Countess of Althann, Vico makes a long digression summarizing the history of the War of the Spanish Succession. And Vico, recorded in his autobiography, a comment made by the Prince Giuseppe Caracciolo, that he could well imagine binding the work and give it a new title *The History of the War of the Spanish Succession*. Later, in January of 1726 in his famous letter to Father de Vitry, who was connected with the Jesuit book review journal *Mémoires de Trévoux*, Vico, complaining of the decadence of the times, noted that no sovereign had yet commissioned a history of this great war to be written in Latin.¹⁶ Vico's attitudes continue the cultural values relating

¹⁶ Giambattista Vico, *L'autobiografia il carteggio e le poesie varie*, Opere, v. 5, Scrittori d'Italia, 11 (Bari: Laterza, 1911), 189-192.

poetry and patronage associated with the great earthquake of 1689; Vico believed that fine writing supported by an aristocrat of pure blood was an essential part of his culture's self-understanding. Vico seemed to think that his age wouldn't understand the meaning of its wars until their significance was explained in good, honest, royally subsidized Latin.

In Vico's Naples the three most common themes for volumes of occasional poetry were those celebrating marriages, those mourning deaths, or those written by members of a confraternity praising the Trinity, Its members, the Virgin, or a patron saint. Vico's verse was almost completely devoted to the first two categories. The themes of these volumes are the three principles (religion, contractual marriage, and burial of the dead) which Vico calls "the common sense of the human race", principles common to all people and which are necessary for any community. No specific source for Vico's formulation of these principles has been identified and they may be Vico's own. In the first edition of *Scienza nuova* these principles are given special significance for they were presented in the very first chapter of Book One.¹⁷

Vico's three principles which he calls the "common sense of the human race", principles common to all people, were not uncontroversial. The very first sentence of the 1725 *Scienza nuova*, which denies the possibility that there might be a community of atheists, is a case in point. To the twentieth century ear this probably sounds hopelessly pious. But, we should remember that no less an authority than Pope Clement XI, under pressure from the Jansenists, proclaimed that Confucianism, at least as followed by the Mandarins, was atheism. In other words, atheism was the public religion of the Chinese. Despite this official pronouncement Vico denied the reality of this claim. And, at least in terms of social practice, the issue of the burial of the dead was not a clear-cut matter for a Christian or a European. The bodies of the leaders of the Macchia conspiracy had been exposed to public abuse; and customarily the corpses of executed criminals would be displayed at the Castel Capuano for public edifi-

¹⁷ Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, pp. 172-3 (*Scienza nuova prima*, Book 1, chap 1). For a sense of the variety of interpretations of these principles consider Leon Pompa, *Vico* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 30-34 who explains these principles as fundamental to Vico's science, and addresses the issue of their empirical status. Then consider Donald Kunze, *Thought and Place: The Architecture of Eternal Place in the Philosophy of Giambattista Vico* (NY: Peter Lang, 1987), pp. 114-115, which formulates these principles in terms of Aristotle and the Judeo-Christian conception of God.

cation. And, Vico knew that according to canon law the Church had the right to exhume the bodies of heretics and deny them burial. He may have known of the tradition of an order of nuns on nearby Ischia who did not bury deceased sisters, but let them decay seated in a specially fitted room as reminders of the vanity of mortality. Francesco Oliva wrote a comedy concerning, among other things, necrophilia in 1724.¹⁸ And to mention a more standard source, in 1712, a Neapolitan lawyer, Filippo Solombrino, wrote an essay concerning the burial of the dead.¹⁹ The issue Solombrino addressed concerned the problem of who should bury the poor that died in the streets. He argued that right to a burial was in accord with the laws of nature, of the nations, divine right, and canon and civil law. He was critical of the clergy for their reluctance to accept this act of mercy as a duty. His book was added to the Index in 1715.

Vico's three principles reflect a change in the concerns of political theorists in the 1720s; instead of worrying about how to control the next period of revolutionary violence, the principles explore the issue of social stability in general. The amazement that Europe had passed through a period of crisis and warfare without major civil unrest raised the question of what held societies together. Attempts were made to identify those core values or ideas that provided this solidarity. Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, written in the early 1720s, reflects this concern; his Usbek, uprooted from his traditional setting, uses thought experiments like the stories of the Troglodytes to reflect on this issue and orient himself in the new political setting of Europe. Vico's assertion about the impossibility of a society of atheists should be read in this context. The claim was an orthodox one, but its primary purpose was to identify the fundamental principles required for all social organizations. The first *Scienza nuova* begins with the natural rights tradition—to be sure, the tradition modified so as to exclude the theoretical possibility of a nation of atheists. In the second and third editions Vico alters the beginnings of *Scienza nuova*,

¹⁸ There was a rage in Naples in these years to collect representations of dead bodies; this was one of the specialties of the wax modeller Caterina De Julianis. A very powerful image of a sufferer from syphilis has been attributed to her. De Dominicis, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletani*, 3, 621–3; Gennaro Borrelli, "De Julianis, Caterina", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 36, 273–275.

¹⁹ Filippo Solombrino, *Ragioni a pro del comune della fedelissima città di Napoli e de' suoi casali intorno il seppellire i morti* (Napoli: Bernardo Michel Raillard, 1712). Raillard wrote the dedication.

indicating that he had chosen to deal with a different set of questions and problems.²⁰

Vico's Science

What was most striking, however, at the beginning of Vico's new book was his claim that it was a science.²¹ Vico was emphatic that he was writing a science. The adverse experience of Giannone and Grimaldi may have brought home to him the importance of determining with precision the boundaries of his "new science".²² From his autobiography we know there was an invidious, even hostile reaction to his proposal of a "new science" in *De uno*, but there is no indication that this proclamation of innovation offended clerical sensibilities. Scholars have noted that Vico's *Scienza nuova* echoes the title of Galileo's *Due scienze nuove*. But in explicating this allusion attention has focused on matters of method, not on the way Galileo defined the field of his sciences. In consequence, it has been concluded that Vico had an imperfect grasp of Galileo's experimental method and the way in which he applied mathematical principles to the study of nature. By proclaiming a new science Vico was not adopting Galileo's methods, but identifying a new field that had not been studied systematically. Among his first tasks was to explain and insure the separation of theology and Scripture from his subject matter, human history.

In response to translations of Deist writings of English Newtonians published in Naples at the end of the 1720s, Vico elaborated his position further in the second and third editions of his science. In his explication of his Principles he makes his famous statement about

²⁰ For a description of how this argument about atheists was understood in Paris, see, Elisabeth Labrousse, "Reading Pierre Bayle in Paris" in *Anticipations of the Enlightenment in England, France, and Germany*, ed. by Alan Kors and Paul Korshin (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 7-16.

²¹ Leon Pompa, *Vico: A Study of the "New Science"*, argues that Vico's work, based on its internal logic and principles does indeed achieve the scientific status it claims for itself. Gino Bedani, *Vico Revisited*, Part V, pp. 161-212 attacks this argument. My concern will be to look at the "external" or cultural context of the term science.

²² Giannone shared Vico's general conception of science, but he applied it in a more traditional way. See, Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Una difesa dell'autonomia e della libertà della scienza: il parere di Pietro Giannone intorno alla censura del gesuita Massimiliano Galler sul libro del medico Johann Paul Ganser" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, ed. Raffaele Ajello (Napoli: Jovene, 1980), 379-413.

the unknowability of the natural world because it had been made by God. Modern commentators emphasize its rejection of natural science and the enterprise of mathematical physics. Contemporary readers would have heard as well Simplicio's statement from the end of Galileo's *Dialogo* which affirmed the weakness of man's intellect and that different theories of the structure of the universe could only be treated as hypotheses. Knowledge about the world of nature, according to Simplicio and confirmed by Salviati, was inaccessible. We can only form hypotheses about nature. This orthodox statement, in all likelihood, would have attracted the attention and even animosity of readers who would not focus on the subjective freedom promised by Vico's study of man's historicity. It is ironic that 1744, the year of Vico's third edition of *Scienza nuova*, was also the year that Rome produced, at last, an edition of Galileo's *Dialogo* which included all the requisite statements about the hypothetical character of Galileo's investigation. What we don't know is the kind of irony we should read in Vico's echo of Galileo.

Science and Orthodoxy

Some modern commentators believe that Vico protests too much about his acceptance of Catholic doctrine. Despite the ingenuity that has been used to develop the hypothesis of his unbelief the evidence to support this view does not seem to me to be compelling. First, contemporary readers who were trained specifically to identify theological error found no fault in his work. Vico tells us even the "negative New Science" was read by his friend Giulio Torno, who served as his regular ecclesiastical approver. Clearly a competent and able man, Torno was later promoted as supervisor of all ecclesiastical book approvals published in Naples. The fact that certain clerics and Finetti is the most prominent example, as individuals expressed reservations about Vico's science have no more authority than that of personal opinion. While certain independent thinkers in Venice associated with Conti, admired Vico's work, as far as I can see most members of the radical enlightenment did not see Vico as in their camp. Professions of belief and statements rejecting heterodox opinion need not identify an author as a dogmatist or conceal a secret revolutionary. What is often more problematic with Vico's ideas are those that appear to us the most orthodox.

Galileo, as Vico knew, had asserted that research in the natural sciences could only be productively pursued if its subject matter, purpose and presuppositions were independent of theological controversy and Biblical exegesis. And Vico knew the ways Galileo's trial had effected subsequent research especially of Italian scholars. He concluded if there was to be a genuine science of humanity, it too, would have to be independent of revealed religion. The natural rights tradition had already proposed a general model that would fit certain requirements for a human science; however, each of the leading theories, in different ways, excluded divine providence from their theory. They did this, according to Vico, because they could see no way of proving providence without Scripture. But knowledge of providential governance Vico believed was independent of Scripture and of religious authority. According to these theorists knowledge of providence could only come through revelation not from their science itself; that, in Vico's view, undermined the authority of the interpretations of Grotius, Selden, Pufendorf and their followers.

Vico's application of the Galilean conception of the independence of the natural sciences to the human sciences resulted in his placement of the Hebrews into a special, almost untouchable category. Vico accepted the chronology found in Genesis as true but irrelevant to his project; in the same spirit he argued that the development of the Jewish people had to be understood in isolation from all other peoples. In this way Vico believed he could claim his work to be a science in accord with the Galilean understanding of the term. Many modern commentators on Vico's thought have presumed his placing the Hebrews in a special category, was either a bow or a nod to orthodoxy. But they have misconstrued what the orthodox view actually was.

The traditional view, derived from or read into St. Augustine was that the pagans and Hebrews had separate but related histories. Pagan history was a debased or fallen version of the Hebrew's experience, not separate. Certainly Orosius in his expansion of Augustine's views had wanted to show that the history of the Hebrews had a fundamental relationship with the grand history of pagan world empires; their meaning could be unlocked and explained by the Old Testament and a symbolic understanding of the parallels of the cities of God and Man. The seventeenth century faced other concerns; it was no longer necessary to persuade readers of the significance of Hebrew history. The interest of these readers was to refute sceptics

who denied the truth of Hebrew scriptures. What they sought was confirmation from pagan evidence of events described in the Old Testament, but particularly in Genesis. Typical of the scholars working on these problems was Francesco Bianchini, whose *La storia universale* I mentioned earlier. In Bianchini's view, and this was the standard belief, the Hebrews, as the chosen people, were the inventors and possessors of all knowledges and useful arts. Their pagan neighbors imitated, borrowed or stole this wisdom and skill. And, as was the nature of such transfers, the copy was inferior to the original. The pagans would pass their version on to even more degenerate and confused people. Bianchini's goal was to trace their beliefs, language, cultural rituals back to a Hebrew original.²³ The model for this kind of approach was based on an interpretation of the Tower of Babel. It was presumed that the workers on the Tower all spoke the same language as their illustrious ancestor Noah. Though God rendered them unintelligible to each other, it was supposed that each language possessed traces of the language of Noah; and, either Noah spoke Hebrew, or Hebrew was the language closest to that original one.

The Hebrews had possession of secret wisdom that they had then passed on to a couple of select pagan wisemen, who had then modified this teaching for the needs and understandings of their own people. The aim of Bianchini was to show that there was evidence from the pagan world to support the claims of the exceptional and exemplary character of the Hebrews. From these researches they hoped to lay to rest questions raised about the authenticity and correctness of the Bible. Unorthodox views frequently took the form of claiming that the Hebrews were just like any other nation, though they may have been somewhat aided by divine revelation and advice. It was argued by some that even Moses learned from the Egyptians and that he copied some of their temple designs and religious practices in his own ordinances. The most radical would deny that there had been any divine intervention on the Hebrews part; and Hebrew legends were full of the same kind of exaggerations that undermined the credibility of the histories of all ancient peoples. Some claimed the

²³ Examples abound, but consider his genealogy of the gods: Francesco Bianchini, *La storia universale provata con monumenti* (Venezia: Battaglia, 1826), 4, 242–271. Bianchini traces the gods back to historical predecessors; the use of images as evidence plays an important part of his argument. For a more detailed comparison, see Franco Lanza, "L' 'Istoria universale' del Bianchini e la 'Scienza nuova'", *Lettere italiane* (1958), 10, 339–348.

Hebrews were a less cultured people than their neighbors, hostile to new ideas, and overly proud of their particular divinity. But these views, orthodox and unorthodox, agreed that the interesting issue, the one needing historical study, was the influence and interchange between the Hebrews and the pagans.

Vico was flat against such exchanges and influences. The idea of influence, its very possibility, presupposed much more sophistication than that possessed by the first peoples, according to Vico. In denying influence Vico undercut the principle model for cultural interaction used by his contemporaries. He also attacked a related model of cultural development which presumed that a learned elite in possession of esoteric wisdom was necessary for change; he called this the "conceit of scholars". All significant transformation of a people, especially a primitive one, Vico argued, came from forces and conflicts inherent to that society. One consequence of Vico's adaptation of the Galilean model of science was to make his investigation irrelevant to most of his contemporaries working in the same field. For the orthodox, Vico's approach undercut a major purpose of their research. They sought to find examples of God's hand in history, esoteric representations of the Trinity, and other indications to show that Christianity was the true religion of humanity. Advocates of the doctrines of the radical enlightenment, as far as I can tell, did not find a kindred spirit in Vico either.²⁴ Vico's refutation of euhemerism, the idea that enlightened reformers and legislators created religious practices for their own political advantage, was counter to their basic understanding of religion as a fraud devised by a clever elite.²⁵

Vico repeats many times his insistence that the earliest nations did not have access to to any special wisdom. In fact they were far stu-

²⁴ Gino Bedani, *Vico Revisited: Orthodoxy, Naturalism and Science in the "Scienza Nuova"* (Oxford: Berg, 1989), 25–32, and Frederick Vaughan, *The Political Philosophy of Giambattista Vico* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971) make an argument that Vico should be considered a member of the radical enlightenment and perhaps an atheist. Such a contention I believe to be an error, as I have argued here, Vico's attitude to Scripture is shaped by his attempt to establish a science. It is significant that the only contemporary accusations of unorthodoxy come from clerics whose hostility to Vico's ideas, as I have indicated, comes from another direction entirely. In any event these accusations did not represent an official position and were part of the academic game among ecclesiastics. More important is the evidence that no contemporary reader of *Scienza Nuova* who also read the tracts of the radical enlightenment, put Vico in that group.

²⁵ Paolo Rossi, *Le sterminate antichità: studi vichiani* (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1969) chap. 2, 81–131.

pider than we can easily imagine.²⁶ And the intellectual sophistication attributed to these early peoples was all a fabrication of later scholars. Vico believed that their ignorance was not mere coarseness; it was a complete system of expression which he called Poetic Wisdom. In certain respects this was a startling change of interest for Vico, for he had not seemed particularly interested in either Biblical study or prehistory. Even from *Il diritto universale* it wasn't clear that he wanted to study the mental processes of primitive cultures. But this approach to the Hebrews was not completely separate from Vico's previous philosophical speculations. Specifically, the idea of making as knowing fitted handily with his principle of separating Hebrew development from that of the gentile nations. The Hebrews, because their ordinances were made by God, did not make their own history; and we cannot know their history in the same way as we can know pagan history. However, we can know the history of the gentiles because we as human beings were its sole authors. Hence he argued that we can't have scientific knowledge of the Hebrews. But we can know our own history, he argues, because we have made it. The implications of this conjuncture of the principles of making and knowing, his idea of Hebrew specialness, and the absence of any wisdom or learning in the earliest peoples, took Vico some time to work out to his satisfaction. But its essential outline is present in the first edition *Scienza nuova*.

For Vico the issue of isolation of the first nations is a philosophical principle. The possibility of significant influence is a learned skill and one suited only to sophisticated intelligences. What Vico objected to was not influence as such, but the idea influence must come from the more intelligent and be passed on to the ignorant. His science itself is evidence he believed that a sophisticated culture could learn significant things about itself from an understanding of its primitive origins, and suggests it could absorb some of that barbarous vitality into its values.

²⁶ Damiano Romano, *Difesa istorica delle leggi greche venute in Roma* (Napoli: Migliaccio, 1736), 31–32. In his refutation of Vico's claims about the origins of the XII Tables, Romano argues that these first Romans just couldn't be as stupid as Vico claimed. He uses other evidence from antiquity to argue for their intellectual sophistication. It would be more persuasive to him to argue that the Romans were fallen sinners than to assert that they were stupid. Romano's reaction indicates how difficult Vico's contemporaries found it to accept the idea that reason was actually an historical development, not a fixed property of human beings.

Vico's Method

Vico used his three principles to answer the arguments made by sceptics, and particular, the three modern systems of Grotius, Selden and Pufendorf that claimed to ground themselves in reason but did not require a Christian divinity as an assumption. The most compelling refutation of universal principles came from the relativists who argued that the appeal to the *consensus gentium*, the unforced behaviors of the candid world, was merely an attempt to claim that the status quo was natural. The idea that there were any norms that all people held in common had come under severe attack from many sources since the late sixteenth century. Furthermore, as had been aggressively argued by Bayle, even if such an agreement should exist, that could not compel assent from the critical mind. Vico's defense of his principles and the idea of shared beliefs among all people is a complex one and is based on his conception of right or *diritto*, and his new methodology. He developed this methodology using what he called imaginative universals by which the critic could attempt to reenter or reexperience the thought of the prerational beings who founded and developed archaic societies. His final formulation is perhaps best exemplified by what he called his discovery of the true Homer, and in his use of the "Four authors" in his autobiography.

As Vico formulated his accomplishment, he had developed a new method that supplied what had been lacking among the philosophers and the philologists. In this he brought both disciplines together in one science. With this claim Vico was echoing an assertion of Justus Lipsius, who was echoing Seneca. Seneca in his *Epistolae* (Letters) claimed to have made philology of use to philosophy. Lipsius, the great editor of Seneca, made a similar claim for himself at the beginning of the seventeenth century. He saw this to be his major contribution to the study of ancient literature, and, as a consequence, to have made the classics relevant to modern times.²⁷ Vico did not accept Lipsius' claim, for Lipsius, like all the rest, made the mistake of ascribing wisdom and understanding to the societies of the early gentiles. Lipsius and the Stoics erred by presuming that there had always been people with more or less their level of intelligence and attitudes. In fact, Vico argued, intellectuals and philosophers were a

²⁷ Mark Morford, *Stoics and Neostoics: Rubens and the circle of Lipsius* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 136–37.

fairly late development in human history. Up until his science, philosophers had regarded their rationality as something that was in principle accessible to human beings, and they all agreed that men gifted with special intelligence could understand each other at any time period in history. Lipsius, then, had oversimplified the scholar's relation with the ancient world. His claim to use philology with philosophy was in fact to skew or distort philological evidence so it would be intelligible to the conventions of philosophic thought.

Vico's emphasis on philology indicated one of his major criticisms of the historical methodologies of his contemporaries. They had abandoned literary evidence to study inscriptions and coins. Lacking Vico's method they of course were helplessly confused because they did not know how to juxtapose this information with genuine remnants of archaic times. They had presumed that inscriptions and coins were less subject to the vagaries of time than written texts, but such scruples, Vico was convinced, were unrelated to the truthful recreation of the realities of these cultures.²⁸ Ancient myth could not be read allegorically or as possessing esoteric wisdom, but it did contain important information that could reach the properly trained researcher.

Natural Right and Natural Rights

Having shown that in its origins, humanity, except for the Hebrews, had no conception of rational or abstract thinking, Vico's next problem was to show how we, who can only think in rational terms, could comprehend the emotional and feeling kind of thought experienced by the first people. Vico needed to develop a method that would show him how to organize his evidence in significant patterns. The issue of what constituted verifiable evidence had become a hotly debated topic in Europe.²⁹ In the mid 1720s the center of this debate was the Parisian *Académie des Inscriptions*. There the debate concerned whether one should reject all the fables that infect the works of the ancients in favor of a history founded on facts.³⁰ It is doubtful that Vico read or followed the controversy in detail but he was well aware

²⁸ Mario Sina, *Vico e Le Clerc: tra filosofia e filologia*, (Napoli: Guida, 1978), 76–78, 98–113.

²⁹ For the background of this see Carlo Borghero, *La certezza e la storia: Cartesiansimo, Pirronismo e conoscenza storica* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1983).

³⁰ Lionel Gossman, *Medievalism and the Ideologies of the Enlightenment: The World and*

of its general issues. In Naples Egizio and Mazzocchi indicated by their research projects that they considered artifacts, like inscriptions, far more amenable to serious research than literary and historical texts.

Vico, however, was convinced of the primacy of the spoken and written word as a source of evidence. It was not words deciphered from inscriptions or vases, but words from the great authors like Homer, Vergil, Livy, Tacitus and Tasso that were Vico's primary sources. Vico's emphasis on human language as a way of understanding the mind, his demonstrations of how language responds to economic and political power, and the way words preserve remote or vanished cultures are among the reasons for the continued interest in his thought. In certain respects his emphasis on language continued the program of Arcadia—with the proviso that Vico's first poets were not learned, but crude and as Vico calls them "all sense". It is curious, keeping in mind the importance of Arcadian activity in his life, that in his *Scienza nuova* pastoral societies are scarcely mentioned. The very first Cyclopean family fathers weren't shepherds. They created their clearing for the planting of wheat. He makes an occasional mention of pastoral economies, but his primary interest is on settled agricultural production.

Vico's point about these first men whose poetry we think we understand was that, in fact, their values and thought are virtually unintelligible to us. In the second and third edition of *Scienza nuova* Vico focused on Homer, but already in the first edition he had developed his principles of imaginative universals. And, he argued, it was this kind of creative thinking that was needed if we were to understand those periods of archaic history for which we have no historical evidence other than fables. These fables, Vico repeatedly states, cannot be understood by the kinds of rational analysis that had been used by previous investigators. Instead Vico proposed a new method for describing the social changes and culture of archaic peoples. The fables, he believed, were what we might call examples of proto-rational thinking. Being unable to generalize, or to abstract from particulars, thoughts were represented in story and mythic image. It is not surprising that we find no clear predecessors for these ideas in Vico's contemporaries. Their understanding of significant action and design,

Work of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), pp. 156–7.

was that it was shaped by a knowing architect; the alternative, was the all but unthinkable idea that a significant pattern be created without a rational or directing intelligence. The prevailing model for understanding difference in ancient cultures was the degeneration of a people from noble precursors. The monuments of a nation's accomplishment could be found in their public buildings, coins and medals; less reliable would be public records, and the lowest level of certainty was what might be inferred from history, literature and language. Vico's preference for the evidence of literary fables over that of inscriptions, artifacts and pictorial images seemed to hearken back to the scholarship of a less scientific and critical age. His claim that irrational people could engage in a form of systematic thinking was difficult for them to grasp; and while his belief that human activity could be understood in a special way might have had some appeal, it too seemed to hearken back to what his contemporaries might regard as a pre-scientific age.

The primary example of Vico's use of imaginative universals and the central principle of his science is contained in his analysis of *il diritto naturale* (natural right). *Il diritto naturale* were the first words of the first edition of *Scienza nuova*. His usage of the term natural right was different from that of say Capasso, or the less precise meaning given it by Costantino Grimaldi. Capasso, at the Medina Coeli, had defined natural right as the power the individual has to pursue their own interest; Grimaldi did not distinguish natural right from natural law, he used the terms interchangeably, and, sometimes both together to strengthen an appeal rather than to make a legal point. In *De nostri studi* Vico had praised those jurists who looked beyond the law text and let their judgement favor the public interest over natural equity.³¹ In *Scienza nuova* Vico deepened his criticism and even denied the universal validity of the concept of natural equity. Natural equity, like rationality, was an historical product; but the public interest, although it changed over time, was a constant concern in human society. Vico, instead of emphasizing the claims of individualism, accepted the argument of the importance of public trust; but, this trust was founded on an uneasy concentration of power and local knowledge in a ruling class.

³¹ Michael Mooney, *Vico in the tradition of rhetoric* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 76–77, has shown the same concern as being an essential part of Vico's *Institutiones oratoriae*. See, Giambattista Vico, *Institutiones oratoriae* ed. G. Crifò (Napoli: Istituto Suor Orsola Benincasa, 1989).

The extended title of Vico's first edition of *Scienza nuova* makes the statement that the book contains "another system about the natural right of the gentile peoples".³² Vico wanted this book to be understood in the tradition of natural rights theories; subsequent editions drop this claim from the title page. This alteration represents a slight change of direction, not a major turn around of ideas. Vico focused the first edition of *Scienza nuova* on natural right because he believed he had made a major discovery that natural right was not one thing but a multiplicity of rights. Instead of one natural right, in principle accessible to all, Vico had discovered that there were many natural rights distributed unequally among people. Instead of equality of right being something people had in common, that view was simply one stage in the long historical development of humanity. And, furthermore, he believed he could resolve the question of whether human beings would on their own, by nature, agree to live in society. The existence of natural right is the same as proof of humanity's natural sociability. For, Vico argued, if people were not sociable then societies could not have developed spontaneously and in isolation. Civil life would have had to have been taught and forced upon the recalcitrant by someone with greater wisdom, vision and strength. And there would only be civil rights, no natural rights. But such a conclusion would force us into contradiction with historical evidence, for we would also have to admit that some peoples had sophisticated beginnings and that they possessed esoteric wisdom. But, Vico had already proved that that model of human origins was full of contradictions. Therefore, he argued, if humanity had primitive beginnings, then there was natural right and people were naturally sociable; if there was no natural right, there would be no hope of a coherent account of human beginnings because the evidence was full of contradictions. This is the central theme of the chronological table in the second and third edition of *Scienza nuova*.

The consequences of Vico's notion of natural right can be illuminated by a comparison with two materialist models which deny humanity's natural sociability: that of Lucretius and of Hobbes. Lucretius, in Book V of *On the Nature of Things* (*De rerum natura*), described human beings in their natural state as unsocial animals.

³² This "another" does not contain the irony of Herder's *Yet Another Philosophy of History*; the natural right/natural law tradition was viewed by Vico as dangerously seductive and in need of correction.

Individuals were compelled into social organizations by the trickery or wisdom of a clever leader. There followed a gradual process from the loose organization of a tribe to the more hierarchical city and kingdom. Lucretius assumed that one stage will develop from its predecessor but he was not much interested in this process; it like many key inventions in human development seemed to him to be the result of chance discoveries. The legitimization of power was by force, an appeal to a natural law or right wasn't part of his approach. Hobbes, on the other hand, centered his materialist account around the issue of natural right. One mechanism, the social contract, effected the crucial transition from the state of nature to civil society. The historical development central to the traditional Epicurean account was not of concern to Hobbes. Vico adapted elements from both writers. He retained the idea of gradual change from the ancient Epicureans. And from the social contract/natural rights tradition, he took the idea that there was a crucial stage or transformation in the process of developing civil society.

Vico's proof of natural right was also connected with his demonstration of the existence of Providence. While he took ideas from Lucretius and Hobbes, he intended to counter their dismissal of divine providence. Their error had been to presume that in the natural state human beings were rational or at least could grasp rational thought. Simply put, his proof of providence was the development of society out of anti-social individuals; the proof of natural right was the continual creation of justice out of injustice. If the earliest people had been rational as Lucretius and Hobbes had assumed, then they might have been right in their conclusion that providence was not needed to explain human society. But given that, as Vico shows, rationality itself was an historical product, pre-rational forms of social organization were proof of a providential design. At each stage of history the selfish motives of individuals became transformed into social virtues. Natural right, while deriving from selfishness, was the principle of man's sociability. Trustworthy institutions arose from complete distrust.

Vico's history began with immense savage men whose physical strength would seem to permit each to destroy the other. However, the result of those initial clashes was a number of separate families. As Vico developed this history, he made clear that each attempt to satisfy a right creates a restraint. Vico's wild giants claimed the right to worship their Jove; this made them feel superior to the vagabonds

who wandered aimlessly without gods and, hence, without rights. The giant enslaved these strangers, unaware that this same behavior was typical of all giants. Subsequently, doubting he could control his slaves by himself, he united with a neighbor only thinking to keep his power. The unanticipated consequence of this action was to create a level of organization superior to that of the giant in his family. While their intention had been to lord it over their slaves, the consequence was to have created another institution to control themselves, the city-state. And instead of subduing their slaves, they had created a rural proletariat of plebeians who created their own social and religious institutions to rival those of the patricians.³³

Vico's conception of natural right is one which combines continuity and diversity. Its function may be the same but the way it appears in altered historical circumstances is different. We have seen similar concepts in Vico's work before with his conception of *conatus* in *De antiquissima*. In that work *conatus* was like a hinge which transferred motion but did not move; it facilitated change but did not change itself. And, while there are similarities, natural right appears to me a more complex concept. *Conatus*, at least as Vico developed it as an idea, had no temporal aspect; but temporality was key to natural right. One thing that Vico does carry over from *De antiquissima* is the impulse to identify natural right as a metaphysical substance. Instead of metaphysical points, we have natural right as the middle term between God's providence and the varied actions of men. Natural right, summed together in all its appearances, is called the ideal eternal history.

At times Vico will present the ideal eternal history as if it were a series of portraits moving from Polyphemus, to Achilles, a Scipio, a Julius Caesar, then a Tiberius and finally a Nero. Each of these types characterized the distinctive habits and values of a particular time period.³⁴ In the first *Scienza Nuova* he presents an outline of the his-

³³ This idea of significant form and structure developing out of a previous undifferentiated state was developed in great detail in the study of chick embryos by Marcello Malpighi, the creator of the modern science of embryology. He was particularly interested in how an ordered process could regularly arise out of disorder. Malpighi taught at Bologna and corresponded with Cornelio at Naples. While there are clear parallels in their analysis of development, as far as I can see, Malpighi's work is not the kind of thing Vico read. The more realistic supposition would be that Malpighi's system is the kind of thing his friends discussed.

³⁴ B.A. Haddock, *Vico's Political thought* (Brynmill, Swansea: Mortlake Press, 1986),

tory of the Age of Gods and the Age of Heroes in which each section was dominated by a figure or type. These distinct periods represent changes and developments in the arts and other cultural values. He noted that changes in artistic style represented political, economic and social changes. The extent to which Vico realized that the art of a high culture could be divided into distinctive styles is not clear. We don't know what significance he would attribute to, say, the new kind of music represented by Vinci. From his more general remarks about poetry, he would probably see Vinci's greater emphasis on the meaning of words as opposed to the exposition of feeling through music as a style appropriate to the Age of Men. And he might grant that the *opera seria*, which took as its theme the way a providential sovereign would continually draw order from disorder, was the art form which represented the Age of Man as Homer's poems had the Age of Heroes.

Vico described in great detail how the men in the Age of Gods and Heroes wrote poetry, but he doesn't explore art of the human age in the same way. Vico does, however, describe the origins of different philosophic schools. In the first edition of *Scienza nuova* his description of the origin of philosophic thought echoed the traditional genealogical approach of Valletta.³⁵ He traced a series of doctrines but did not explain how they were shaped and representative of other cultural values. Vico presented this new approach in what he described as a digression at the conclusion of Book IV of the last two editions of *Scienza nuova*.³⁶ According to Vico, Socrates invented logic and deduced abstract universals and intelligible genera (as opposed to poetic universals and genera) from his observations of the Athenian Assembly enacting laws. Plato discovered metaphysics when he recognized that in the Assembly the passion of each individual became combined into the dispassionate idea of the common good. Aristotle perceived the different forms of justice and the moral virtues in political behavior; he concluded by defining a just law as the will abstracted from the passions. In Vico's mind Plato made the more significant contribution, because his insight was the idea of providence:

pp. 199–201 makes a parallel argument on the relation of historical example to Vico's political philosophy.

³⁵ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, *Scienza nuova*, first edition, p. 273 (# 297, Book 3, chap. 21).

³⁶ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, third edition *Scienza nuova*, 678–680 (# 1040–1045).

that is, to perceive the dispassionate order which results from each individual pursuing their own interest.

But neither Socrates, Plato or Aristotle had realized the importance of the particular institutions of Athens for their reflections. They had all interpreted Solon's dictum "Know thyself" as an invitation to pursue philosophy. They had not realized that its original meaning, according to Vico, was a political slogan calling on the common people to look at themselves and realize that they were made of the same stuff as the nobles. The three philosophers supposed that Solon was talking to men like themselves. They were unaware of the shaping influence of Athenian political institutions on their thought, and that their philosophizing was the result of a particular historical development. They thought that philosophy was the result of a chance discovery, something that in principle was possible for anyone with the appropriate intellectual gifts in any culture. Vico's new method revealed the social context for this specific cultural product, Greek philosophy. This historical discovery of philosophy was of marginal interest to the course of human history but of profound personal interest to Vico. He regarded himself as a philosopher and wrote his *Autobiography* to show how he himself became a philosopher. His personal development, and his account of the origins of his books, however, indicated that his own discovery of philosophy had to be a derivative thing in contrast to the Greek original. He did not learn metaphysics from observing the market place of Naples but from books. His situation was not original as had been that of Socrates, it gave him a modern critical standpoint.

According to Vico, what Plato regarded as metaphysics was actually politics being expressed at a different level of discourse. Philosophers, as he saw it, had attempted to rewrite history by claiming that the essential changes in human history had been brought about by an elite with esoteric wisdom. Vico counters this claim asserting that all significant social transformation had come about because of the demands of the people, that is the plebs. The reason for this apparent radicalism came from Vico's conception of humanity's natural sociability, not from a veiled streak of revolutionary terrorism. Given the mentality of these people, it was only through conflict and strife that ideas and principles could be clarified. Fear of traditional authorities and the impulse to destroy them shaped these developments in unequal measure. Among his accomplishments with this method was to develop a way of studying pagan religion that did not reduce it to

the workings of the devil, or the plotting of a clever elite. Popular and noble religion engaged in a complex dialectic that had its own history and inner dynamic. But, except on very limited issues, these reflections were not applied by Vico to the history of the Christian religion.

The Relation of Scienza nuova to Social Reform

Among the many unresolved interpretative questions concerning Vico's thought concerns its relations to contemporary political issues facing Naples and the entire issue of reform.³⁷ But there is no general agreement as to whether Vico had a serious interest on such things. Consider, for example, the "arguments" used by the giants to enslave the wandering vagabonds, and the subsequent reasoning of the patricians. Was it Vico's intent to repeat in this modified form the arguments promoted by Sepúlveda to justify the Spanish conquests in North and South America? The Indians, Sepúlveda aimed to prove, could be conquered because they had no laws and no settled habitations, and that they engaged in barbarous crimes such as cannibalism and human sacrifice. The Spanish crown was justified in their conquest and destruction of these people; and it was quite right not to allow the survivors full ownership of land or participation in the government. These actions, therefore, were consonant with natural right and natural law.³⁸ Does Sepúlveda represent "cyclopean" political thinking? Does this tell us something of Vico's attitudes to Spanish colonialism? As is usual with Vico's writing the reference is insufficient to indicate whether he intended such a parallel. On this issue it is worthwhile remembering that Vico believed, at least in Greece and Rome, that it had been revolts of the plebeian classes that were the positive forces of change. But we don't know if he saw Masienello's revolution or the Amer-Indian revolts at the end of the seventeenth century in the same light. Vico's writing is frustratingly vague as to its connections and application for his own time. Commentators are even uncertain as to whether he saw himself as living

³⁷ See, for example, Giuseppe Giarrizzo, *Vico, la politica e la storia* (Napoli: Guida, 1981); Giovanni Vitolo, "Il feudalismo di G. Vico", *Atti dell'Accademia di scienze morali e politiche* (Napoli), (1972), 83, 83-123.

³⁸ Anthony Pagden, *Spanish imperialism and the political imagination*, pp. 28-35.

at the end of the heroic age, possibly entering a period of democracy, or as writing in the last phase of monarchy just before a time of renewed barbarism.

Vico's Associates

One of the reasons Vico's thought was not much appreciated in its own time was that it did not follow the traditional norms and evidence sources accepted by those working in related disciplines. Vico's use of scattered bits of evidence, at one level, resembles the analysis of a Bianchini; however, what Bianchini trusted most was visual evidence, images taken from tombs and other monuments of antiquity. Bianchini's method and use of non-verbal evidence was markedly different from the sixteenth-century theorists on pagan religion exemplified by Vincenzo Cartari's *Theatrum ethnico idololatricum politico historicum*, first published in 1571, but which received some 25 editions. His work obscured the earlier accomplishments Gregorio Giraldi's *De deis gentium* and Natale Conti's *Mythologiae*. Cartari along with Ripa's *Iconologia* of 1593, especially their illustrations, had a profound effect on artists' representations of ancient myth. Their work relied on literary sources; medals, inscriptions and copies of Roman and Greek art are rarely referred to and there is no indication that a primary source was consulted by an author. Vico's work, to the superficial observer, had the same limitations in terms of sources as this older tradition. Vico used only literary evidence. His approach was old fashioned when compared with the diversity of evidence used by Vico's close associates, the antiquarians Egizio and Mazzocchi, who were involved in an intensive study of Greek and Roman ruins, inscriptions and tablets. Vico's interest in archaic Rome was connected to their work, and his study of Homeric poetry had precedent in Gravina and Garofalo. Gravina's writings on Rome had remained in the legists tradition of attempting reform through the rationalization of law and its codification. Vico, on the other hand, gave greater emphasize to political power and its relation to status and class. Law, in Vico's view, was not an example of rationality but a way of rationalizing power relations between members and groups of a society. In this respect Vico's view was closer to Giannone's analysis of the different regimes that had ruled southern Italy or Doria's description of the division of political power in Naples and how it

might be reformed. For an outsider, it was easier to classify an author by their subject rather than their method.

To the observer of the 1720s there were other significant bonds that would encourage linking Vico with the antiquarians; perhaps most importantly, they all wrote poetry together. It was quite easy to agree, although no one understood exactly what Vico was up to, that he had deep thoughts about archaic Rome and that his learning was profound. Frequently to the outsider, the purposes of most antiquarian researches were obscure; if the number of citations was immense, it was easiest to conclude an investigation must be definitive. Vico was at least ambivalent about being grouped with the antiquarians; he seemed to present himself as the successor of Porzio, Aulisio and Gravina. Vico mentioned neither Egizio or Mazzocchi in his autobiography, although we know he had regularly worked with Egizio since 1710 on volumes of occasional poetry. In 1719 Vico organized one of these volumes to celebrate the marriage of Adriano Carafa and Teresa Borghese; the Carafa had commissioned Vico to write the life of their illustrious predecessor. This marriage volume included essentially the same group of authors as the Argento volume. More of the University faculty participated in this one and, Gaetano Lombardo, the Cartesian translator, and Pietro Metastasio were important additional participants. Vico responded to several of the poems in this collection resulting in a number of poetic contests or exchanges; he engaged Cristofaro, Egizio, Capasso, Sebastiano Alipio and Nicola Cirillo.

This was a minor confrontation in comparison to the scale Vico adopted in the Filomarino-Caracciolo marriage epithalmium *Junone in Danza* (Juno Dancing), Vico mentions 30 of the participants.³⁹ Of Egizio he wrote that "with a pious hand and cautious step he collects learned relics of antiquity."⁴⁰ This is only a sample of Vico's flattering portrayal of his associates. It may be surprising to learn that these books of poems aroused interest outside of Naples. Matteo Egizio in correspondence with a friend, Enrico Enriquez, in Rome,

³⁹ Ariosto's listing of his friends at the beginning of the last canto of *Orlando Furioso* is perhaps the most famous example of this sort of thing. This was also a commonplace in painting; Nicolo Maria Rossi, a student of Solimena, in his "The Four Altars" done for Viceroy Herrach he portrays the music staff of the Royal Chapel; Bernardo De Dominici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletani*, 3, 688-689.

⁴⁰ Giambattista Vico, *L'autobiografia carteggio e le poesie varie*, Opere, 5, Scrittori d'Italia 11 (Bari: Laterza, 1911) "Junone in Danza", p. 288.

discussed and criticized the merits of these volumes as well as the success and failure of individual contributions.⁴¹

The poetry and the taste of this group was printed in a two volume set, *Delle rime scelte di vari illustri poeti napoletani* (Selected verse of famous Neapolitan poets) published in Florence in 1723. The authors selected are fairly representative of the authors who participated in the celebratory volumes published during the Austrian viceregency. Five of the forty-one authors were women; curiously Metastasio was not included in this group. Nor do we find any of the librettists who we know wrote comic operas in Neapolitan. The "Neapolitan poets" were not those who wrote in Neapolitan. The topics, style and language indicate the ongoing triumph of Arcadian ideals.

Like Vico, Egizio believed that his real contribution to his intellectual world lay elsewhere. Egizio, born in 1674, had a long acquaintanceship with Vico, and like all who knew him well, found him a prickly personality. One of Egizio's first major published books was a chronological work on the Roman emperors published in 1713.⁴² His first date is the death of Caesar which he dates using three chronologies, the year of the world, the year since the founding of Rome, and the years before the birth of Christ. Beyond the scope indicated by the title he includes lengthy annotations on more recent events such as the publishing of La Peyrère's pre-adamite hypothesis, Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, and the Neapolitan controversy with the Inquisition. Later, in 1719, Egizio played a crucial role in persuading Sebastiano Paolo to publish a new edition of Bartolomeo Beverino's study of the weights and measures used in antiquity. Egizio wrote the secular approval letter; the book was published by Mosca. That same year Paolo published an erudite work on the history of the baptismal rite which relied heavily on French ecclesiastical scholarship.⁴³ He had already published a life of Elisabetta Albano, with an approval by Egizio in 1715.⁴⁴ Paolo was to become an important intellectual for the conservative clergy.

⁴¹ BNN MSS XIII C 91, # 19 (2/14/1721), # 20 (2/14/1721), # 15 (4/19/1720) concerns an argument over Vico's *De uno*.

⁴² Matteo Egizio, *Serie degl'imperadori romani* (Napoli: Francesco Laino, 1713 (1715)).

⁴³ Sebastiano Paolo, *De ritu ecclesiae Neritinae exorcizandi aquam in Epiphania* (Napoli: Mosca, 1719).

⁴⁴ Sebastiano Paolo, *Della vita e virtù della serva del Signore Elisabetta Albano del terz'ordine di San Francesco* (Napoli: Domenico Roselli, 1715).

Egizio wrote a number of articles explaining inscriptions but his major scholarly accomplishment was his 1729 work on the Bacchanalian conspiracy in Rome of 186 BC. A bronze tablet containing the decree of the Senate concerning the conspiracy had been found in Calabria in 1640. Egizio prepared a detailed commentary on the text. His approach saved him the trouble of having to address any of the larger issues suggested by the event: the challenge posed by a new religious movement, the important role played in it by women, and the general theme of the relation of the state and religion. Neapolitans, in the Inquisition controversy, had traced the first example of the *via straordinaria* to the suppression of the Bacchic movement, but even this was not mentioned by Egizio. Egizio's numerous notes are almost all references to ancient sources; he wrote as if modern scholarship on this topic did not exist. The most important source ignored was Cornelis van Bijkershoek's study of Rome's encounter with foreign religious cults.⁴⁵ Egizio does not cite this work; and he does not mention the contributions of other contemporary scholars to this topic.⁴⁶ Nevertheless Egizio did publish and edit one of the longest legal documents extant from the Roman Republic. His work was regularly cited by eighteenth-century editors of Livy.

A more conservative scholar than Egizio associated with the antiquarian movement was the canon Alessio Simmaco Mazzocchi, born in 1684. Today he is perhaps best known as being the subject of a sculpture by Giuseppe Sanmartino which is in the Santa Restituta basilica of Naples' Duomo. Winckelmann, in the middle of the century, regarded him a font of erudition about Greek antiquities.⁴⁷ His reputation rested on his work as an archaeologist and his publications concerning the antiquities unearthed at Herculaneum. But his major work which appeared in 1727 from the press of Mosca concerned the coliseum in Capua and inscriptions relating to it.⁴⁸ Mazzocchi's book included a fairly large number of celebratory poems, among the authors were Niccolò Capasso, who had endorsed

⁴⁵ Cornelis van Bijkershoek, *De cultu religionis peregrinae* (Amsterdam, 1719).

⁴⁶ See Frank Manuel, *The eighteenth century confronts the gods* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 21–33, for example. Manuel, describing a different line of research, does not mention the work of antiquarian and legal scholars.

⁴⁷ The papers of a conference devoted to Mazzocchi have been published; but I have not been able to see a copy or even to find one to borrow through interlibrary loan. *A.S. Mazzocchi e il Settecento meridionale*, ed. Pietro Bottaro (Salerno, 1979).

⁴⁸ Alessio Simmaco Mazzocchi, *In Mutilum Campani Amphitheatri titulum aliasque nonnullas Campanas inscriptiones commentarius* (Napoli: Felice Mosca, 1727).

Giannone's *Istoria*, and Nicolo Cirillo another friend of both Giannone and Vico.⁴⁹ The work attempts a history of Capua relying solely on the evidence of inscriptions; but the model for this kind of city history was to be published by Scipione Maffei with his *Verona illustrata* of 1731. Mazzocchi, having lost out to Maffei turned to other topics.

In 1732 two tablets were discovered at Heraclea. By means of Guevara, the Neapolitan representative in Lisbon, the tablets came to the museum established to house the antiquities discovered at Herculaneum. Mazzocchi was commissioned to publish them and six years later appeared his *Commentaria in R. Herculaneensis Musei aeneas tabulas Heracleenses* in 1754–55. The tables concern the administrative law as promulgated in Roman Heraclea. Mazzocchi prepared a commentary and used it as an opportunity to reformulate the understanding of Magna Graecia, the name given in antiquity to Sicily and southern Italy. Neapolitan intellectuals had a long tradition of linking themselves with the ancient philosophers who lived in Magna Graecia; they self-consciously saw themselves as continuing its philosophical traditions.

The cultural communities of Magna Graecia, at least as they had been viewed before Mazzocchi, were like those of the Arcadia, a culture independent of Rome. It was well known that Plato had journeyed to Sicily and southern Italy. From his Dialogues it could be inferred that he held in high esteem the thought of the Pythagoreans, and that of the followers of Parmenides; members of both these schools were important participants in several dialogues. In Naples, pride of place was given to Pythagoras, in part because he was the traditional creator of the word philosophy. Giuseppe Valletta turned Pythagoras into an atomist who learned this hypothesis from students of Moschus, the traditional founder of the idea of atoms. Valletta accepted the view that Moschus was a scribal error or dialect pronunciation for Moses. And there was the related theory that Pythagoras studied atomism from Ezekiel. In any event, the atomic hypothesis was not an innovation but was the natural philosophy concealed in the Hebrew Bible. Valletta was essentially repeating older Renaissance views that could be corroborated in the histories of philosophy of the late seventeenth century. His contribution had been to make explicit how

⁴⁹ In Vienna, Giannone forwarded the book to the *Acta eruditorum* for review; Pietro Giannone, *Epistolario*, ed. Pantaleo Minervini (Fasano du Puglia: Schena, 1983), (Letter 241 and 262), 540–1, 568.

these works might be relevant to the Naples of the 1690s; Grimaldi, in his unpublished fifth refutation of Bendetti had repeated essentially the same story. Vico had used the belief in the philosophic communities of Magna Graecia in *De antiquissima*, but his claim was that Pythagoras stopped there because of its pre-existing cultural community. The intellectual and scientific challenges facing Naples in the 1720s, however, were very different; the fate of Giannone and Grimaldi indicated that the state might be as dangerous an enemy as elements of the Church to the free pursuit of learning. Giannone, who had praised the Pythagorean legislators, Zeleucas and Carondas, in *Istoria civile*, later in *Il triregno* debunked Pythagoras' influence on Greek thought, and criticized his theories concerning the transmigration of the soul.

Mazzocchi represented a new direction in the conception of the cultural significance of Magna Graecia. His study of place names in southern Italy convinced him that their etymological origins could be traced to Hebrew words that had first been brought to this region by the Phoenicians. In his *Tyrrhenicis dissertationibus* he derived some 600 place names from Hebrew words. A sample of his method is the name Herculaneum, a noun easily derived from the Etruscan or Oscan hero Ercol; Ercol came from the Hebrew verb *herac* or *harac*, meaning to burn.⁵⁰ Pompeii, also of Hebrew origin, came from the word for embers; Vesuvius was from the verb, to spew forth flames. He identified hundreds of these which he shared with his friend and student Giacomo Martorelli. This hypothesis received popular form in the *Dell'Antiche colonie venute in Napoli* (Concerning the ancient colonies that came to Naples); volume 1 appeared in 1763 and a second followed ten years later. The author is listed as Duca Michele Vargas Macchiucca, but both volumes were ghost written by Martorelli.⁵¹ Volume one describes the first colonists of the region who were Phoenicians. They argue that the wanderings of Odysseus took place

⁵⁰ Such etymologies have a dubious history, one example is the inventive work of Annus of Viterbo; see Anthony Grafton, *Defenders of the Text* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 88, 273.

⁵¹ The *Dell'Antiche colonie* is a very curious work; on the relationship of Martorelli and Vargas Macchiucca, see Franco Strazzullo, *Il carteggio Martorelli-Vargas Macchiucca*, Settecento napoletano documenti, v. 2 (Napoli: Liguori, 1984). Martin Bernal, in *Black Athena*, seems unaware of these predecessors; to read them might suggest that other non-scholarly motives besides racism could be involved in attacking the idea of Phoenician origins.

in southern Italy, but mostly in the Bay of Naples; also Prometheus' place of imprisonment and Homer's land of the pygmies was located there. Furthermore, the city of God, Zion, described in Psalm 48, was none other than Naples itself. With volume two we return to the more traditional story of the Greek colonies in southern Italy. The first settlers came from Euboea, the land of Homer; and it also included is the view that Epicurean atomism was transmitted by Pythagoras.

We no longer have a Greek Pythagoras bringing the Hebrew wisdom of atomism to southern Italy; in this view the Hebrews, or at least their language had been there long before the Greeks arrived. Whatever one imagined the Greeks as bringing, it had to be understood as being built on a Hebrew superstructure, hence, perhaps, the faith and constancy of the Neapolitans could be explained by their Hebrew beginnings. This kind of approach was far less unsettling than one carrying with it the doctrine of atomism. And, if we accept the notion that the Neapolitans were naturally Hebrews, then there was no anachronism in the beautiful crèche scenes, the *presepi*, whose figures were made by Neapolitan craftsmen with their backdrops of the bay of Naples. But, more importantly, this identification with the Hebrews was a way to rejoin the aspirations of the intellectuals with more "mainstream" Neapolitan values.⁵² Such a view encouraged a more harmonious perception of the relationship of scholars and ecclesiastics. No longer atomists with their dubious moral philosophy, but God-fearing Hebrews became the predecessors of Magna Graecia and of Neapolitan intellectuals.

The Neapolitan writers who responded positively to Vico's work probably also impeded the work's broader reception. A case in point is Giovanni Bernardino Tafuri's *Delle scienze e delle arti inventate, illustrate, ed accresciute nel Regno di Napoli*, published by Parrino in 1738. This was a work in the tradition of Gemma's history, and had as its fundamental principle the same kind of conceit of scholars that Vico criticized. Tafuri was part of the group associated with Mazzocchi and Egizio, he cites their works with respect, and there is even a

⁵² Mazzocchi, usually fanatically scrupulous about evidence, yielded to the power of tradition and affirmed that St. Peter founded the Neapolitan church (before going to Rome!) despite clear evidence to the contrary. And he bent to the pressure to affirm other traditional stories of Catholic orthodoxy. Romeo De Maio, *Pittura e controriforma a Napoli* (Bari: Laterza, 1983), pp. 41, 60.

reference to Giannone's *Istoria civile*. Vico's *Scienza nuova* receives especial praise "quanto di mole piccolo tanto assai grande d'idee" (out of such a little pile there are so many ideas). He is unusual in that he actually refers to a specific observation made in *Scienza nuova*, one concerning the use by the nobility of feathers to decorate their helmets.⁵³ Tafuri's work had a very lengthy introduction by Tommaso Alfano, a Domenican, who was friends with the antiquarians, Giannone's group, and of Muratori as well. He had founded a short lived academy in 1709 devoted to the promotion of erudition and antiquarian studies. Alfano was known for his promotion of modern ideas, but, like many of Vico's friends, he did not share or perhaps even understand *Scienza nuova's* approach towards rationality.

Vico rejected this kind of analysis both in principle and in detail. At least in private conversation Vico could make pungent criticisms on the price of aristocratic pretense; his remark "that there were too many whose carriages were drawn by their own guts" to his pupil Antonio Genovesi is well known. And *Scienza nuova* makes clear that it was the urban poor that were responsible for significant social reform and revolution. But, despite these views, Vico was associated with the conservative group. This was his own choice and part of the persona he constructed for himself.

This had much importance in determining his reputation. Martorelli, it should be noted, was Vico's sacred approver for the 1744 *Scienza nuova*. The secular approvers of the 1730 and 1744 editions were members of religious orders; the second edition was dedicated to Pope Clement XII, formerly Cardinal Corsini who was honored with the first, the third went to Cardinal Acquaviva. Vico committed the cardinal error of making his ideas only available to those who read his book. His use of approvers, his patrons and his friends proclaimed tradition. Readers like Romano could understand certain of Vico's key insights but were unconvinced by what seemed his partial use of evidence. Vico's ideas about rationality as an historical product were not unthinkable in the eighteenth century, but it was a marketing mistake to try to promote them through conservative clerics, antiquarians and their patronage networks. This lack of clear guidelines as to how to categorize Vico's work would even be a greater impediment to scholars outside of Naples. Vico's willful attempt to construct

⁵³ Giovanni Bernardino Tafuri, *Delle scienze e delle arti inventate, illustrate, ed accresciute nel Regno di Napoli*, (Naples: Parrino, 1738), pp. 192-3.

his own identity received only partial confirmation from the variety of identities available to academics in his community. Vico, a pioneer in proving the link between language and national identity, exemplifies one limit of what we might call self-fashioning in Naples of the 1720s.

CHAPTER TWELVE

BOOKSELLERS AND READERS: NEWTONIANS AND THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

A Neapolitan Bookshop in 1734

As a rule the prospect of going to a bookstore gives one an optimistic feeling. A bookstore and the items in it, are representations of a culture; they organize cultural space. As a cultural artifact a bookstore can reveal continuities and discontinuities in more general conceptions of knowledge. An analysis of such a cultural space might combine a diachronic approach which looks to previous formulations or constructions that represent a culture, with a synchronic study comparing this version to others of the same time. I have found one list of the contents of a Neapolitan bookstore, unfortunately, I have not been able to locate another; but in itself it reveals some interesting things about the publishing trade in Naples. Bookstores unlike libraries do not merely house or store the intellectual tradition of a culture; the aim of a bookstore is not to preserve but to sell. The wares in a bookstore represent what a bookdealer believes the people in their community will buy and should read. In this sense, then, the contents of a bookstore can be looked at as a kind of projection to the future, a possible path for the continuing intellectual life of a community.

Before browsing through the shop of Bernardino Gessari let me say a little about my primary source; it is a list of the works appended to his 1734 edition of Giovanni Alfonso Borelli's *De motu animalium* (On the Movement of Animals). Borelli's book had acquired something of the status of a classic; its importance for the study of human movement is indicated by the recent English translation of 1989. It had originally been published in 1680 in Rome and dedicated to Queen Christina. Gessari's Neapolitan edition was dedicated to Francesco Buonocore, the physician to Philip V of Spain; Philip had been under regular treatment by his doctor for what seemed to be manic depression. The dedication dates from October, five months after Charles of Bourbon, Philip's son, had captured Naples from the Austrians.

The list contains some 75 items and is arranged alphabetically; the entries sometimes begin with the title of the work, or the author's first or last name. Prices and dates of publication are not mentioned. Gessari always indicated the size, or rather the format of each volume; and, for five he indicated a place of publication, three from Milan and two from Amsterdam. It is possible that all the rest were published in Naples, the evidence suggests this, but it was not possible to confirm: I was not able to locate copies of about 20% of the list because the bibliographical description was insufficient to make a positive identification. Gessari asserted at the top of the list that most of the works on the list were printed by him.

Gessari's shop was located near Santi Filippo e Giacomo (the Church of Saint Philip and James) on the Via San Biagio dei Librai, the traditional street for bookshops. At this time there were at least some 35–40 bookshops in Naples, many of them were owned by individuals who were printers as well.¹ Gessari was a printer too, but by the 1730s his role was more like what we would call a publisher. He provided the capital to produce a book (the primary expense was for the paper) and then hired a printer to produce it. Many of the works listed as being in his shop had been published in this fashion. As we have seen from autobiographies and from the testimony of witnesses appearing before the Inquisition, bookstores were a common place to go to discuss ideas and served as public places where it was possible to talk about unorthodox views. Gessari engaged in the illicit booktrade, and some of the items listed in his published catalog indicate irregularities and illegalities in their original publication. What other materials Gessari may have had for sale aren't known for certain. There is some suggestive evidence that these 75 items did not represent his entire stock.

At this time a bookseller no longer sold a book in unbound sheets; usually a purchaser would take it home bound in a publisher's binding which was typically of limp vellum. A vivid representation of this kind of binding can be seen the 1751 sculpture made by Francesco Queirolo for the San Severo Chapel. The sculpture titled "Il Disinganno" which has been translated as "Enlightenment", is part of a monument dedicated to Antonio de'Sangro. It represents a man extricating himself from a net; he is being aided by a winged boy who is clearly too old to be a putti. The lad is partially supported by

¹ Benedetto Croce, *Curiosità storiche*, p. 169.

a globe, and a little flame rises from his crown. Opposite the globe is a pile of three books on which the man's foot is pushing; the way in which the books are bent demonstrates the flexibility of this temporary binding structure. A bookbinder could readily cover the item in a more expensive leather binding if the owner so desired, the number of books remaining today bound in limp vellum in modern libraries suggests that many didn't choose to do so. While the sculpture is ambiguous on this point, it seems that after having viewed the natural globe, the Undeceived or Enlightened One will next turn to the books; though it is possible to interpret him as turning away from and rejecting book learning.²

We don't know how books were arranged in any of the Neapolitan bookstores. One might, however, imagine that Gessari's Catalogue represented a typical order used by booksellers. If there was a subject classification the most likely candidate would be the schemes used by the book review journals of the day. Those categories would be theology and ecclesiastical history; the law, medicine and physics; mathematics; history and geography; and a miscellaneous category that included primarily poetry, philosophy and the Greek and Latin classics. The stock in Gessari's shop was composed of approximately 25% theological works; 10% legal works; 20% medicine and physics; 5% for both mathematics and history; 35% miscellaneous; and the remaining 5% unclassified because of insufficient information about the book. If we compare this distribution with the pattern found in the *Acta Eruditorum* the only major disproportion would be in the historical category.³ The *Acta* reviewed significantly more books of this kind and not quite as many theological ones. The other principle of arrangement would be that of format or size. It seems that books would frequently be grouped into quartos, octavos and duodecimos. This might make sense in terms of conserving space on shelves. In his *Vico vindiciae*, Vico considered part of the vindictiveness of the review to be its misidentification of the format as octavo, while in fact it was a duodecimo. He believed that this mistake would

² For Masonic symbolism associated with this work, see Clara Miccinelli, *Il Principe di Sansevero: Verità e riabilitazione* (Napoli: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1982), 152–158.

³ On the publication of science books see Ugo Baldini, "Dati sull'attività scientifica in Italia fra Sei e Settecento" in *Storia d'Italia Annali 3: Scienza e tecnica nella cultura e nella società dal Rinascimento a oggi* ed. Gianni Micheli (Torino: Einaudi, 1981), 532–545.

impede locating a copy. His concern suggests that bookdealers displayed their wares according to size or format.⁴

A subject scheme of organization was adequate for the four or five hundred items that might appear in the annual index of the *Acta*. Where it began to fail was in ten year indices. For larger collections we have a model for Neapolitan book organization in the catalogue of the library of the Oratorians, known as the *Biblioteca Oratoriana* or the *Biblioteca dei Girolamini*. The library is adjacent to their church and is just across the street from the Duomo. The catalogue followed what was essentially a more detailed version of the *Acta* scheme and the same system was used to organize books in auction sale catalogues.⁵ The foundation of the Girolamini Library collection was the library of Giuseppe Valletta; Vico had appraised his collection, and, the Oratorians following his advice, purchased the major part of the collection in 1726. A beautiful space was created for the books in a bright and spacious room with elegant tile floors and magnificent wood carvings and bookcases on the walls. It is one of the great libraries of the eighteenth century still open to the public.

There are some interesting quirks about the items on Gessari's list. Among the books he was selling was Antoine Arnauld's *Logica, sive ars cogitandi* (Logic, or the art of thinking, also known as the Port Royal Logic). Arnauld was associated with the Jansenists and many of his works had been condemned by the Index but not this one. Gessari had published an edition of this work in 1718 listing Amsterdam as its place of publication. Amsterdam isn't exactly the place you would imagine a Neapolitan Catholic to have a shop. We know from his other activities that Gessari was in Naples around this time. It is unlikely that he would have had the text printed in Amsterdam and then shipped to Naples; while not prohibitive, the expense would have been great. It is much more likely that he printed the work clandestinely in Naples and then sold it surreptitiously. 1718 was a crucial year in the struggle of the Jansenists against the Bull *Unigenitus*. In that year the Roman Inquisition decreed that any who attacked this Bull were to be denounced. Instead of either travelling abroad

⁴ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, pp. 343, 367.

⁵ Marco Santoro, *La biblioteca oratoriana di Napoli detta dei Girolamini* (Napoli: SEN, 1979), pp. 30–32; for a sixteenth century catalogue, see, D. Gutiérrez, "La biblioteca di San Giovanni a Carbonara di Napoli", *Analecta augustiniiana*, (1966), 29, 59–212.

or importing his edition it is likely that Gessari sought to avoid potential legal complications and published his work in Naples but used a false place of publication.

Another controversial publication was the first Italian translation of Descartes' *Principia* (Principles of Natural Philosophy), his major work describing his physical theory. The translator was Giuseppa Eleonora Barbapiccola, as mentioned before, a Neapolitan and friend of Giambattista Vico. The title page indicates the work was published in Torino by G.F. Mairesse. Can we regard Gessari's listing of this work without the mention of its being published elsewhere as indicating that this work had originally been published by him as well? There are fifteen items on the list that I have not been able to verify the publication information. But, except for those where a foreign place of publication is acknowledged, Gessari seemed involved with each edition in some way. The year before the Barbapiccola book, Gessari had published a medical treatise of Descartes' student Regius in 1721; this book, too, was on sale.

The first book on Gessari's list is the *Anatomia corporis humani* of Philippus Verheyen (1648–1710). The edition he was selling must be the 1734 one; he had previously published this work in 1706 and in 1717. The 1706 edition indicated that Gessari had published the work in Louvain. Louvain, the great Catholic university town, was under the rule of the French until their defeat at Ramillies at the end of May, 1706, by Marlborough and the Allies. Whether the war was a factor in choosing what is probably a false place of publication is not clear to me. The work was a fairly standard anatomy school text used by both Protestants and Catholics as indicated by its publication in Catholic Brussels (1726) and Protestant Leipsig (1731). Were Neapolitan medical students more willing to buy a text that had Louvain as its source? Did Bulifon think he had some kind of monopoly on university text book publication, and did Gessari, to keep out of his way, use a false imprint? What advantage the false place gave him is not clear to me. I should add that the earliest publication of Gessari that I have found is Luc'Antonio Porzio's *De motu corporum* which he published in 1704. This was the work that prompted the controversy between Porzio and Doria; Gessari also had copies of this on sale in his shop.

Let me turn to another curious feature of the list. Only some 10 (15%) of the authors listed were alive in 1734. Most were dead, and the majority of these had published their major works in the late

seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Some of the authors were from Naples, though a significant number of the works were written by non-Italians. A book store where most of the material was over 30 years old is strange indeed. It may, however, reflect a cultural norm for certain of Naples' scholars; Vico gives the impression that he stopped reading new books around 1710, and his citations for the most part bear this out. While we know he was aware of later material, this stance may more properly be seen as a trope or a persona that he was adopting. The intellectual world Vico cited is contemporaneous with the one that populated Gessari's book list.⁶ This preference for older works is seen in all the subject categories except for mathematics. The mathematical works were textbooks designed for *Collegio* and University students in Naples.⁷

Another distinctive feature of intellectual life in Naples evidenced from Gessari's list is that Neapolitans did not publish editions of the Greek and Roman classics.⁸ The only authors listed are an Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Valerius Maximus and both are from Amsterdam; Cicero's *Tusculan Questions* and the *Panegyrics* of Pliny are included but I have not been able to verify where they were published. It is noteworthy that there is no evidence of the publication, even of school texts, of the classical authors in Naples. Did students find what they needed in the used book market? London, Paris and Amsterdam continued to churn out Livys and Ciceros; in northern Italy scholars concentrated their efforts in publishing texts from the Italian Middle Ages. But in Naples we see neither of these interests. Neapolitan contributions to classical studies took either the form of wide-ranging works like Vico's *Scienza nuova*, or micro-histories like Matteo Egizio's work on the Bacchanalian conspiracy, or the antiquarian investigations of Alessio Simmaco Mazzocchi.

The only exceptions I have found is the 1738 publication of an

⁶ Paolo Rossi, "Chi sono i contemporanei di Vico?" *Rivista di filosofia* (1981), 72, 51–82. Vico refers to only four works published after 1720, seventeen in the period, 1680–1720. Rossi, on p. 67 summarizes that Vico cited 30 authors from the sixteenth century, sixty 1600–1680, 14 from 1686–1700 and 7 from the eighteenth century.

⁷ Gessari was selling the works of Nicola De Martino concerning Euclid, Apollonius, and his editions of the works of Tacquet. Pietro Nastasi, "De Martino, Nicola Antonio" and "De Martino, Pietro" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 38, 600–606.

⁸ For a general summary of Italian publications in this period, see Gabriel Maugain, *Étude sur l'évolution intellectuelle de l'Italie de 1657 à 1750 environ* (Paris: Hachette, 1909), 372–375.

edition of Diogenes Laertius' life of Aristotle. The commentary was that of Giuseppe Prisco; the secular approval was by Martorelli and Gennaro Rossi, who was associated with Vico in several volumes of poetry. The only new edition that I have found published in Naples at this time was Niccolò Carminio Falcone's (or Falconio's) edition of Dio Cassius. And, significantly, he was the only Neapolitan of this period to work with Muratori on his massive compilation of texts on the Italian Middle Ages, the *Rerum scriptores italicarum*.

How Authors Respond to Critics

Several of the scientific and judicial works for sale in the shop had acquired a reputation for having become the standard in their field. The shop included up to date commentaries on such texts. Gessari published in 1728 the medical works of Michael Ettmüller (1644–83) which were annotated by Niccolo Cirillo, the professor of medicine at the University of Naples.⁹ His edition of Ettmüller was probably designed for his course at the University; his publication had changed the order of presentation and added notes to bring the work up to date. It was reviewed negatively by the *Acta Eruditorum* in 1731; Cirillo answered the review by publishing a refutation in the form of a short pamphlet in 1732. Cirillo was supported by a Genevan journal specializing in Italian books; word had gotten out that the anonymous reviewer for the *Acta* was none other than Ettmüller's son.

Cirillo's reaction to the negative review was similar to Vico's response to the *Acta*'s 1727 review of his *Scienza nuova* of 1725, but Vico had no external supporters.¹⁰ This work, the *Vico vindiciae* was published in 1729. In defense of the *Acta* it should be made clear that they stated they had not seen the book and were only passing on what had been written by an Italian correspondent. There has been a certain amount of speculation as to the identity of the "Italian friend" who provided information to the *Acta*. The number of Italian intellectuals who had contacts with the *Acta* in Leipsig was quite large. Some modern scholars have tried to narrow the possible

⁹ Paola Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di Antonio Genovesi* (Napoli: Morano, 1972), 35–54.

¹⁰ Vico and Cirillo had been associates at least as far back as the Medina Coeli memorial volume; Ugo Baldini, "Cirillo, Nicolo" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 25, 801–805.

candidates to a couple of Vico's acquaintances in Naples. Nicola Capasso, who caricatured Vico in a collection of his Neapolitan dialect verse has been proposed as a possible source; but how seriously should we take insults written in Neapolitan? one of the points in writing in the dialect was to lampoon one's friends and enemies. Capasso was the author of the secular approval letter of Vico's *De mente heroica* (The Heroic Mind) of 1732. If Vico had any suspicions or even hard-feelings he might well have sought a different approver.

Giannone, who was living in Vienna and who had contacts with the editors of the *Acta* has also been proposed as a source.¹¹ But there is no evidence to support this, though there was no admiration between the two men.¹² In fact, Giannone was amused by the errors of fact the *Acta* review made about Vico. This makes it extremely unlikely that he provided information to the journal.¹³ In his letters from Vienna Giannone does speak disparagingly of Vico's autobiography, and not without reason. Vico's representation of himself and his portrayal of the intellectual scene of Naples was skewed. "Vico's fable of himself", as Verene has called it had little to recommend it to Giannone. It would seem to me that the most likely sources for the *Acta* would be their agent in Rome, the Pagliarini; their agent in Venice probably had better information.

Vico's complaint about the reviewer and review is one of the best examples in the genre of the indignant author answering a bad review. Of special relevance was his complaint that the reviewer had not mentioned his refutation of the system of John Selden, but only acknowledged his arguments against Grotius and Pufendorf. This was not simply a matter raised on account of wounded pride, nor was it about matters of fact; it also indicated Vico's involvement with the publishing world. It must be remembered that Vico's primary audience for his pamphlet was the intellectual community of Naples; such an item would have had only limited distribution elsewhere. As a Catholic, Vico was on firm ground claiming he had refuted the systems of these three authors: Grotius' religious writings, were on the

¹¹ Donald Verene, *The New Art of Autobiography*, p. 28.

¹² Pietro Giannone, *Epistolario*, (# 241), p. 541; this letter of May, 1728 makes fun of the *Acta* for calling Vico an abbé.

¹³ It is true that Vico's ecclesiastical approver, Giulio Torno, wrote a manuscript hostile to Giannone, but this was after the Vico review, and Giannone didn't seem particularly annoyed by it. Pietro Giannone, *Epistolario*, pp. 773, 783, Letters of 1/20/1731 and 3/3/1731.

Index; while the Protestant Pufendorf's *De iure naturae* had been condemned in 1711, the *De officio hominis* remained acceptable reading until 1751; the case with Selden, however, was bleaker as most of his works were forbidden to Catholics between 1712–1716. Typical of Vico's use of his sources, of the three, Selden is the only author he praised, despite his total condemnation by the Index; Vico pointed out that Selden, at least, accepted the divine inspiration of Genesis. Here, as in other cases, Vico offered tacit support to an author or idea that had fallen under official disapproval; this is another example of the complexity of Vico's relation to the ecclesiastical censoring of published books.

Vico made the claim that the *Acta* was showing partiality to their own German philosopher Pufendorf; but why make the fuss about Selden? To my mind Vico used this as a way of showing that he was on the cutting edge of European scholarship; at least he was able to present his use of Selden as indicating that his work was up to date. After years of neglect by publishers, in 1725 and 1726, two major editions of Selden's works were printed in London. Neapolitans would have known of them through reviews, and perhaps copies made their way to Naples—the late 1720s was a time of a lively interchange of books between Naples and London. Given Selden's status as a condemned author, one wouldn't expect Vico to speak directly about the revival of Selden studies being promoted in London. His Neapolitan readers would know of the new edition, and would appreciate Vico's prescient promotion of Selden, and be amused that the supposedly erudite journal wasn't so up to date after all. Did Vico understand Selden's role as an advocate of Parliament?¹⁴ Did he understand that in the English context the new edition would be read as supporting the Revolutionary Settlement of 1689 as institutionalized by Walpole and as popularized by the followers of Newton? Around the same time Vico asserted that Bacon was one of the four author's most important to his intellectual development. Such a choice combined with his advocacy of Selden might indicate a genuine sympathy for England's parliamentary solution to political discord. Selden's views on the proper relation of Church and State were similar to those of Giannone; the Londoners interested in Selden would be expected to purchase the 1729 *Civil History of Naples*.

¹⁴ Richard Tuck, *Natural rights theories: Their origin and development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), chapters 4, 5.

These refutations or answers to the *Acta* by these Neapolitans are further evidence of the way in which scholarship and scholarly reputation was very much a local matter. In neither Cirillo's or Vico's self-defense do we find the extreme kind of reaction elicited from Scarfò. Nor is there the courteous dialogue as had passed between Vico and the *Giornale* concerning *De antiquissima*. Vico, in the 1731 continuation of his Autobiography, said he intended on sending a letter to the editors of the *Acta* accompanied by a copy of *Vico vindiciae*. But he changed his mind deciding that the more appropriate response was in his new edition of *Scienza nuova*. His answer to the *Acta* was completely in the public realm of published work, he chose not to reply in private with a letter. Vico regarded the critical activity of scholarship as the public sphere. Cirillo wrote a straight forward defense against the objections raised in the review. Vico, though, followed the model of Grimaldi's refutation of Benedetti; he broke the review into segments and attacked it bit by bit. To this, he added a couple of essays and digressions. One of them which concerns the difference between wisecracks and witticisms ("De humano ingenio"), has a curious predecessor in one of Benedetti's essays from his *Analecta poetica* of 1689.¹⁵

Publishing Autobiographies and Poetry

Gessari's stock included some works of literature. He seemed to have none of the celebratory volumes, nor did he have copies of recent anthologies of Neapolitan poets. He had the works of Della Casa but no Petrarch, Dante or even Tasso.¹⁶ He included works by some recently deceased poets and dramatists, but nothing more contemporary. This is all rather strange because we know from other sources that Gessari was very much involved with the work of living authors. One of the most important new publications in these years was the first printing of Benvenuto Cellini's *Vita* or *Autobiography* in 1728. A great deal about the publication is murky; and, the history of Cellini's manuscript, the number of copies made, where it circulated is not

¹⁵ Giovanni Battista Benedetti, *Analecta poetica*, v. 2, p. 197. See also Giuseppe Martani, "Le fonte classiche della dottrina del riso e del comico nelle 'Vici vindiciae'", *Bollettino del centro di studi vichiani* (1982-1983), 12-13, 333-342.

¹⁶ Vico's friend Pietro Belli published his translation of Girolamo Fracastoro's *Syphilis sive de morbo gallico* (*La sifilide*) in 1731, this also did not make it to Gessari's list.

yet known. The manuscript on which the Neapolitan publication was based is lost and we have no idea how it came to Naples. Was it something that came to light in the sale of Valletta's library? A false place of publication was used, once again asserting that it was produced by Pietro Martello in Cologne. The dedication is to Richard Boyle, whose house had been the center of the Scriblerian Club, and who had served as a patron of Handel and John Gay. It is not known if Vico was aware of this work when he wrote the first part of his autobiography.

The Cellini was not known to Count Gian Artico di Porcia, the sponsor of an autobiography project. Inspired by Leibniz, and encouraged by Conti, a Venetian supporter of Newton, Porcia sought to persuade scholars to write about their intellectual growth. He had gathered several examples, but it was only Vico's that really met his criteria. And, at just this time, a new Italian publication was in the offing that would furnish the right venue. It was a quarterly periodical devoted to new essays and previously unpublished letters on current research topics, and, other works of distinguished scholars that had not yet been published. The master mind behind this project, entitled *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici* (Collection of Scientific and Philosophic essays), was the monk Angelo Calogerà.¹⁷ It continued publishing into the 1750s lasting substantially longer than any of the previous Italian book review journals. The advantage of this kind of publication was that the editors didn't have to write all of the articles; the texts were already written, all the editor had to do was find them.

In this first issue Porcia described his project, called for broader participation and published Vico's life as an example of the kind of thing he was looking for.¹⁸ The autobiography project got no farther than this. Vico was interested enough in the form to write additions recounting his career through the second edition of *Scienza nuova*. The *Raccolta* was quite a success and seemed to fill a useful function in Italy's intellectual life. The only other work in this first issue that

¹⁷ Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Giornale nell'Italia dell'ancien régime" in *La stampa italiana dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento* (Bari: Laterza, 1980), p. 159; see also, Cesare De Michelis, "Calogerà, Angelo" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 16, 790-793.

¹⁸ Cesare De Michelis, "L'autobiografia intellettuale e il 'Progetto' di Giovanartico di Porcia", and, Pietro Giuseppe Gaspardo and Gilberto Pizzamiglio, "La pubblicazione dell'autobiografia vichiana nella corrispondenza di Giovan Artico di Porcia con Muratori e Vallisnieri" in *Vico e Venezia* (Firenze: Olschki, 1982), 91-106, 107-130.

related to Naples was a letter which concerned a new edition of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. The title page said it was printed in London, it probably was part of the clandestine publications issued in Naples.¹⁹ The *Raccolta*, unlike the *Giornale*, made no attempts to speculate on matters like false places of publication. As with the review journals, the first article was important in setting the tone and purpose of the publication. Calogerà had addressed his Preface of this first volume to Antonio Vallisneri and Vallisneri was the author of the first two articles. Vallisneri, following the deaths of Redi and Malpighi, had become the leading biologist of Italy. He had been one of the editors of the 1710 *Giornale*, and his presence here indicated that Calogerà wanted to promote the discoveries and experimental method followed by Italian scientists of the Galilean tradition. Calogerà's other major emphases were local history, the lives of eminent but deceased Italian scholars, and essays interpreting Roman inscriptions. The issues of the Vallisneri article concerned reproduction and the possibility of spontaneous generation. A year after Vallisneri's death, in 1731, Calogerà published another of his essays in which he recounted a conversation from his student days working with Malpighi. He asked his teacher in which bodily organ the soul was located, but Malpighi said with a smile that he knew nothing about it, having found no trace of it anywhere in the body.²⁰ Malpighi was not a materialist, but what was one to make of the story?

New Books in Naples

While Venice was revealing a new side of Malpighi's thought, Naples was publishing an Italian translation of the major work of William Derham, a correspondant of Vallisneri and a friend of Newton. Indeed, one of the items published in the *Raccolta* was a letter of Vallisneri to this same Derham, an English theologian a friend of Newton, and one of the Boyle lecturers—a lecture series intended to prove God's governance of the universe. In 1728 Felice Mosca published an Italian translation of Derham's 1714 *Astro-theology*, a treatise

¹⁹ R.A. Sayce, *Compositorial practices and the localization of printed books: 1530–1800*, (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1979), p. 2 for comments on the quality of a 1725 London reprint of a 1527 Boccaccio.

²⁰ *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici* (Venezia: Zane, 1731), vol. 5, 289.

based on his Boyle lectures. This work was a proof of the existence and nature of God based on an examination of His chief work, the structure of the universe. Derham clearly advocated the Copernican cosmos; that it appeared as a legal publication in Naples indicated how much restrictions on the publishing community loosened up after the departure of Viceroy Cardinal Althann. He argued for the probability that all stars had planetary systems of their own. Such claims did not cast doubt on providence but proved it, for it showed that not chance, but design governed the universe. And to support this argument he used the claim that the common consent of humanity had especial weight.²¹ This work made accessible the kinds of proofs being used in the new rational theology being developed in England.²² The English had discovered a physics that instructed theologians how to argue on God's behalf. Instead of Scripture attempting to teach physics, it seemed that Newtonian physics might teach God the limits of his realm.²³ And, these lectures were also intended to blunt the political radicalism inherited from the English civil war which was being enthusiastically promoted and advanced by John Toland in the early eighteenth century. Newton's new science was thought to provide a complement in nature to Britain's social and political revolution of 1688. His theory of centralized forces which acted on inert matter through an invisible medium was suited to this conservative character of the post-revolutionary settlement. The popularization of Newtonian science, and the authority it claimed for its theories was expected to have a salutary effect on the lives of readers and the mass of humanity in general.²⁴ These concerns may make it seem less odd that Vico determined to mail a copy of *Scienza nuova* to Newton.

The translator of the *Astro-theology* was the Scottish Jacobite Thomas Dereham; Dereham was also the translator of the five volume set of

²¹ William Derham, *Astro-Theology* (1731) (New York: Georg Olms, 1976), xl-xli, 218-227.

²² Margaret C. Jacob, *The Newtonians and the English Revolution, 1689-1720* (Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1976), 180-181. Jacob rated Derham among the shallower of the Boyle lecturers, but this may have made him a better author to introduce the Newtonian ideology to Naples.

²³ John Redwood, *Reason Ridicule and Religion: The Age of enlightenment in England, 1660-1750* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 112-113. Vincenzo Ferrone, *Scienza Natura Religione*, 206-226.

²⁴ James R. Jacob, "By an Orphean charm': science and the two cultures in seventeenth-century England" in *Politics and culture in early modern Europe: essays in honor of H.G. Koenigsberger*, ed. Phyllis Mack and Margaret Jacob, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 248-249.

papers that had been presented at the Royal Society of London. These were published by Mosca between, 1729 and 1734. In 1729 Mosca printed another translation by Dereham; this was George Cheyne's *Philosophical Principles of Religion, Natural and Revealed*. Cheyne's work had originally appeared in 1705 as part of the controversy caused by materialist views like those expressed by John Toland. Cheyne took it as his job to show that there was absolutely no connection between Newton's *Principia* and materialism. One of his primary opponents was Toland's *Letters to Serena*; there is an undated eighteenth century manuscript of an Italian translation of these letters in Naples.²⁵ Gessari's book list indicated nothing of this Neapolitan interest in Newtonianism or the more covert concern with the radical opponents and promoters of Newtonianism; the only work associated with Newton mentioned on the book list was an edition of Bernhard Vereyn's work on geography to which Newton's contribution was very slight.

The Second Edition of Scienza nuova

It is surprising that Gessari advertised no works by Vico. We know from Vico that Gessari had been involved in the negotiations with printers in Venice interested in issuing a new edition of *Scienza Nuova*, and perhaps Vico's complete works. The original plan was to reprint the first edition of *Scienza nuova* with lengthy commentary and elucidation. This edition never appeared; Vico then turned to his Neapolitan printer Mosca to print a second edition of *Scienza nuova*. The draft prepared for Venice was too bulky so Vico recast the mass into a new structure; he seemed to do his most creative thinking when faced with a printer's deadline. The introduction to the new Naples edition was to explain his disagreements with his Venetian publishers and to include their involved correspondance. At the last minute, Vico, suppressed 98 pages of what, at least from the point of view of the *histoire du livre*, would have been a fascinating account. In its stead he provided a summary account of this affair, and replaced the rest with what is now perhaps the most well known feature of his text—the frontispiece and its explanation. By the time Gessari's list was printed, the second edition of *Scienza nuova* had been on the market

²⁵ BNN MSS III A 44, "Lettera ad Serena".

for several years—does its absence from Gessari's advertisement mean that all copies had been sold? A possibility, but we simply don't know.

The second edition was quite different than the first; in form it was similar to the third edition, the one with which readers are most familiar. Vico had finally found a structure with which he remained satisfied. A change of emphasis is indicated by the title. The second and third edition concern the "common nature of the nations", while the first had stated the "nature of the nations by which is found the principles of another system of the natural right of the Gentiles". Vico changed the title of the second edition, and dropped the clause concerning natural right. The first edition gave prominence to philosophy, philology, and natural rights suggesting its closeness to the Stoics. The second and third editions put more stress on the historical character of this science, that is the Epicurean side of Vico's thought. The title of the last two editions stress what is shared by all nations, a term which included both Hebrews and Gentiles. The first edition, in its very title emphasized the division between the Hebrews and the Gentiles. His new organizational scheme emphasized the formal side, the internal logic of his science. The earlier edition had concentrated on external aspects; specifically, he defined the subject matter of his science, noting its separation from Biblical evidence.

This change in title, in the context of the translations of Cheyne and Derham, might suggest that Vico had learned a lesson from English Deism and Newton's thought. A Newtonian science, that feigned no hypotheses, used material principles but was not materialist, and could not offer a mechanical explanation for the operations of its fundamental principle, gravity, offered some suggestive ideas to Vico. This was reminiscent of his own understanding of *conatus* and of natural right. The second edition had elements suggestive of Newtonian science and its political ideology: providence created order from the unthinking, irrational energies of archaic societies; and Vico's political history required a popular revolution which would overthrow the politics and the religion of the Heroic Age.

Vico promoted his *Scienza* as the first Italian work to answer the challenge of the Deists and to provide a Catholic answer in a field that had been dominated by the scholars of northern Europe. He rejected the assumption of the Deists that humanity had forgotten or been seduced from the simple truths of natural religion. Instead of considering priests and political leaders as promoting superstition and slavish devotion to pretended deities, as did the Deists, Vico argued

that the more brutal the religious practice, the truer it was to representing primitive conceptions of religion. And, though the Deists misunderstood the historical character of human nature, Vico agreed with their conviction that the only interesting element worth studying in religion was its human element. To be sure we don't have direct evidence that Vico read these translations, though they were published by his own printer Mosca. Perhaps Mosca saw *Scienza nuova* as fitting in with the series of Deist publications he had produced. Mosca was responding to the intellectual conversation around him when he published these works; the revisions of Vico's second edition seem part of that conversation.

Vico's beginning point for the new edition of *Scienza nuova* is the explanation of the frontispiece. Then he presents a chronological table with annotations. Vico's table did not accept the BC/AD system being promoted in the Ricciardi almanacs. Vico used three different chronologies, that of years of the world, Olympiads and years from the founding of Rome. Vico probably preferred these separate chronologies because they further emphasized the isolation of the primitive nations. The next section was a list of what he called "elements" followed by a statement of his fundamental principles and method. The heart of the work is the second book called "Poetic Wisdom" which presents in a more or less chronological fashion the development of consciousness in the age of Gods and Heroes. Here he combines the origins of ideas and languages, topics that he had separated in the first edition of *Scienza nuova*. Vico had made his discovery of the "true Homer" as he called it; this was the subject of Book 3. Book 4 presented in a more schematic way than Book 2 the course nations must pass through and their cultural forms at various times. Book 5 described briefly how the barbarism following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire could be described as a return to archaic antiquity. There is a brief conclusion proclaiming the workings of providence. This order of presentation emphasized the idea of historical pattern and the development of human nature over time. Vico's reiteration of the historical development of humanity gives greater prominence to the Epicurean aspects of his thought. While the first edition gave more prominence to natural right, the second and third emphasized the notion of the ideal eternal history, and that cultural history was fundamental to human nature and our self-understanding. History was not simply a background factor in a person's life, it was part of their essence.

As far as I know Vico was not following any specific model for the format chosen of this edition. Precedents for specific aspects of his formal presentation can be found in other books printed in Naples. For example Archibald Pitcarin's work on medical science, which was available in Gessari's shop, listed postulates, definitions and propositions. And many authors, whether they used formal propositions, or wrote essays claimed that their arguments had the certainty of geometric proofs. Annibale Marchese, a duke and a student of Gravina, wrote tragedies and epic poems and many of his volumes begin with an engraved frontispiece. His *Carlo sesto* (Charles VI) began with an engraving by Solimena which he then interpreted in his introduction.²⁶ He followed the same approach in his 1738 *Il Viticondo*; here he explains not only the frontispiece but the emblems that appear in the initial capitals beginning each canto.²⁷ Marchese, in 1729 had published another elaborately produced book, his *Tragedie cristiane* (Christian tragedies); not only was there an elaborate title page, at the end of each play there was a chorus set by one of Naples composers: among the authors were Durante, Hasse, Leo, Porpora and Vinci.

Imaginative Universals and an Excursus on Agnellus da Ravenna

A significant accomplishment of Vico's second edition was its formulation of the idea of the imaginative universal. Donald Verene, in his *Vico's Science of Imagination*, has argued that this principle is the master key to understanding Vico's science.²⁸ To be sure elements of this idea and Vico's use of this kind of thinking were evident in the first edition, and suggestions of it are present in *Il dritto universale*. In

²⁶ Annibale Marchese, *Carlo sesto il grande* (Napoli: Felice Mosca, 1720). Vincenzo d'Ippolita, a strong supporter of the Medina Coeli and Vico's early career, wrote an approval letter. The poem includes a spirited account of the conquest of Naples in 1707, and a praise of the knights of the Rofrano family.

²⁷ Annibale Marchese, *Il Viticondo, poema in occasione delle nozze . . . Carlo Borbone collo Maria Amalia* (Napoli: Gennaro and Vincenzo Muzio, 1738).

²⁸ Donald Phillip Verene, *Vico's Science of Imagination*, (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), in particular, 65–95. In his *The New Art of Autobiography: An essay on the "Life of Giambattista Vico written by himself"* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 46, Verene proposes to use these universals as a way to read Vico's biography. Mary B. Hesse, "Vico's Heroic Metaphor" in *Metaphysics and philosophy of science in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: essays in honour of Gerd Buchdahl*, ed. R.S. Woolhouse (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), 185–212. On p. 198 she adds to Verene's view that these imaginative universals have an "ideal or normative character".

the first edition he stated that the idea of a triangle as a uniform designation for all three sided figures can be compared with the way the poetic mind used poetic characters. Here his example of poetic thought is the name Hercules: each hero was not an example of a Hercules or a representative, but they were all Herculese.²⁹ By the second edition Vico understood Homer as being another such imaginative universal; another example is Tasso's Goffredo (Godfrey) who was the universal for a war leader in the Middle Ages.

I have found a significant example of this kind of imaginative and sympathetic thinking in one text that was accessible to Vico: Agnellus da Ravenna's *Liber pontificalis Ravennatensis*. Agnellus, an abbot who lived in the first part of the ninth century, wrote his biographical history of the 45 bishops of Ravenna starting from the first going down to his own day. In his prologue he explains that he had to rely on oral testimony for some of his lives. But he turns this kind of evidence to his advantage, reminding his reader that the Gospel of Mark itself was based on Peter's oral account. His most remarkable statements of method comes as a kind of excursus in his life of Exuperantius, the nineteenth bishop of Ravenna. Agnellus baldly stated that for some of the lives he composed he had no written or oral tradition for his narrative. He still believed, however, he could prepare a valid account of their works and deeds. He did this to avoid a gap in his account, and, more importantly, he believed that with none or little evidence he could compose a life without lying (*illorum vitam composui, et credo non mentitum esse*).³⁰ Among the sources that he used in these imaginative reconstructions were portraits found in some unnamed Church around Ravenna.³¹ But, because these men were all holy bishops, Agnellus intuitively knew how they would behave and act; his use of his idea of a bishop combined with an image or just a name was all he needed to tell the story of a life. Thus as a Homer or a Tasso might use a poetic universal like an Achilles or Godfrey to recount an heroic deed, Agnellus could describe the works of each of these men since they were holy bishops serving and being aided by God.

²⁹ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche, Scienza nuova prima*, pp. 260–61 (Book 3, chap. 5, # 261–264).

³⁰ Agnellus da Ravenna, *Liber pontificalis sive vitae pontificum Ravennatum*, ed. Benedetto Bacchini (Modena: Antonio Capponi, 1708), p. 165.

³¹ Thomas J. Heffernan, *Sacred biography: saints and their biographies in the Middle Ages* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 142–168, esp. 142–3, 157–68. His interest is in Agnellus' use of images in creating his narrative; I believe he is the first to call special attention to the methodology of Agnellus.

Benedetto Bacchini, the friend of Mabillon and the editor of the second *Giornale de'letterati*, was the first to prepare an edition of Agnellus' *Liber Pontificalis*; it was published in Modena in 1708. It was the subject of the lead article in the issue of the *Giornale* which reviewed Vico's *De nostri studi*. Vico, I think it is safe to presume, read the review, but it is unknown whether he read the work itself. And even if he had read the Bacchini edition in 1710, what Agnellus might suggest would not have been relevant to his thinking until the 1720s. However, Agnellus was reprinted in 1722 in volume 2 of Muratori's *Rerum italicorum Scriptores*, and Vico had access to it. Neither the review or Bacchini's commentary discuss in detail the passages that seem to me most relevant to Vico. Bacchini was not interested in Agnellus' methodology in itself. With these caveats in mind I will briefly describe aspects of Agnellus' approach that might have been of particular interest to Vico.

The method of Agnellus was similar to the one Vico hypothesized as part of Homer's compositional process. As Vico imagined his Homers singing of Achilles and Odysseus, describing a courageous individual or an example of cleverness in the heroic age, so did Agnellus write in prose of his bishops. These figures, rather than being representations of specific personalities, were statements of heroic or spiritual virtues. Agnellus was an historian and quite happy to use the evidence available to him. But he was close enough to the heroic way of thinking that issues of evidence did not outweigh his primary task which was a narrative of exemplary lives. The portraits he saw gave him both spiritual and physical evidence for his account; these images were not mere representations but had the capacity to become real. That is, these bishops were examples of what Vico called 'imaginative characters'. They were *certi modelli, o pure ritratti ideali* (certain models or rather ideal portraits) of a particular kind or form of a human type.³² Vico's language matches Agnellus' method. The similarity of approach is intriguing; it is almost as if a member of Vico's heroic age were trying to explain how that age thought and reasoned. Agnellus, it seemed, had some awareness that his approach might be questioned but he sincerely believed that this explanation would satisfy those objections. As Heffernan put it: "For Agnellus—and I am not being insouciant—one good deed is *in substance* the same as any other."³³

³² Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche, Scienza nuova*, p. 444 (# 209).

³³ Thomas Heffernan, *Sacred biography*, p. 164.

Agnellus' reference to portraits is suggestive. But Vico was not in the habit, however, of explaining in detail the origins of his ideas. There were reasons why Vico might not wish to mention Agnellus. First, such an example would not help prove his argument; only someone persuaded of its correctness would see Agnellus as evidence. Agnellus did not write in verse, and, if Dante was the Tuscan Homer, there might be chronological problems to explain. It was one thing to say that Achilles or Pythagoras were not historical individuals but creations of the Greek folk mind; it was quite another to imply the same thing about Christian saints and bishops. Vico was familiar with what happened to Grazini's book about St. Amato. Furthermore it was no secret that Bacchini was put under a lot of pressure not to publish his work because it raised questions about Rome's political authority.³⁴ Vico sought to avoid such controversial topics.

His discussions of the history of the Middle Ages are extremely limited. In the first edition his remarks are scattered, and in the second and third editions the returned barbarism of the Middle Ages was the subject of the very short last book. Vico never discussed the issue of the historical character of Christian belief, but he made clear his discovery that paganism was not a static concept. Faith in the gods changed over time and responded in clear ways to the economic class and political status of worshippers. To have claimed that Agnellus was retailing poetic and historic truths about Christian bishops and then to generalize this would subject the Christian Middle Ages to the same kind of analysis Vico had done for archaic Rome. Vico does not attempt to do this and we don't know if this was because he lacked the requisite scholarly background, that he deemed it injudicious to pursue such a theme, or that it never occurred to him in the first place.

Giannone's Il triregno in Relation to Deism

Vico in the first edition of *Scienza nuova* believed he, in a formal sense, had invented a science of history that excluded the sacred. And this exclusion meant his history did not derive from or imitate

³⁴ Arnaldo Momigliano, *The classical foundations of modern historiography* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1990), 132–136.

the providential pattern governing sacred history. The nations Vico described did not fit into sacred history at all. But belief in a provident divinity was a characteristic of each stage of history; and each people's encounter with the divine had a definite shape and followed a process that his science could explain. Giannone, in *Istoria civile*, sketched a different but parallel idea about history. His work appeared to echo the traditional distinction between sacred and profane history that had been formalized as political and ecclesiastical history in the seventeenth century. But, in practice, Giannone rejected the distinction of sacred and profane history and replaced it by what he called civil history. In his *Il triregno*, he developed this idea further in an attempt to explain that the entire history of the Hebrew and Christian religion had to be understood in terms of one temporal process. Religious belief was the center of Hebrew and Christian culture, and not only did these peoples have a history so did their beliefs. In this respect Vico and Giannone shared the conviction that the history of religious spirituality was at the core a human history.

Giannone's development towards this new understanding of religion resulted from his reactions to the works of the free-thinkers available to him in Vienna. In his autobiography Giannone states that he began to write *Il triregno* (The Triple Kingdom) in 1731; he does not tell how long he had been thinking about and reading for this project. *Il triregno* was a response to the deist writers and libertine works of the radical enlightenment. The deists sought to portray Christianity as a rational, natural religion; the free thinkers described Judaism and Christianity as variations, or even degenerate forms of paganism. The tendency of both was to consider Christianity as if it were simply another religion. Giannone's contribution to this debate was to show, on the contrary, that Christianity brought something new to the spiritual, moral, political and social values of mankind. And even in its corruption this religion was unprecedented and distinctive. His claim for a distinctive value in Christianity was combined with a deep interest in the new approaches to the Bible and religion coming from England.

Because *Il triregno* is incomplete it is difficult to draw more than provisional conclusions. The "Three Kingdoms" of the title were the temporal kingdom of the Hebrews, the Kingdom proclaimed by Christ in the Gospels, and the Papacy. The primary subject of *Il triregno* was the history of the belief in the immortality of the soul. This

became the foundation of the spiritual and subsequently the temporal authority of the Papacy. In *Istoria civile* Giannone had looked at the institutional forms that the idea of sovereignty had taken on; here he examined the different ways the temporal administration of the Hebrews then the Christians responded to this belief in an immortal soul. We do have enough of the manuscript to allow us to wonder whether it would have been widely understood or appreciated. While Giannone had read the Deists and knew their arguments about natural religion, he was not interested in their rationalizing approach to religion. The Deists, using an understanding of natural religion, judged current versions of Christianity and criticized Catholicism. A common argument was to claim that Catholicism was essentially the same as paganism. While Giannone shared certain of these views he showed little interest in developing the tenets of natural religion. He had less interest in presenting proofs of God's existence based on His works. Instead, his research would probably have gone in the direction of the study of comparative religion. For some Deists all religions were equally uninteresting for they were all deformations of natural and rational religion. Religion was the tool of the state; its priests exploited the ignorance and superstition of the people. But what motivated Giannone was to understand the diverse forms of religious belief that had been created.

Giannone, at least to a limited extent, was concerned with the development of Christian belief as an historical process. But, in this regard Vico's approach was potentially more radical, for he claimed that paganism had a distinctive and profoundly human core. Vico thought even paganism had a serious spiritual content. Unlike the Deists and most orthodox commentators, Vico did not regard Paganism as a degeneration from a more perfect religion, nor as the pious fraud created by more or less unscrupulous political and religious leaders. Vico argued that there was a significant history and spiritual development in gentile religion. His approach denied the existence of natural religion, that is a pure but primitive faith in a divinity; the Hebrews may have a distinct religious tradition, but Vico does not characterize it as possessing the moral and priestly purity that the Deists imagined for natural religion. In this regard, Vico and Giannone had gone far further than the Deists in their attempt to explain religion as essentially a product of human fabrication. A Deist would use natural religion as a norm by which to measure and criticize an actual religious practice; Vico considered such criteria to

be an example of the "conceit of the philosophers".³⁵ Giannone, while he might grant the justness of the Deists' position, was more interested in the way the idea or innovation took institutional form.

Doria's Encounter with the Deists and the Chinese

Paolo Mattia Doria read Cheyne's work on natural religion, and prepared a manuscript refutation of it. Doria had little patience with new ideas coming from England. In 1724 Doria had charted out a new direction when he attempted to restore philosophy to its real foundations. The 1724 *Discorsi critici* had been an attack on Descartes' philosophy. This work had Venice as its place of publication, though the book clearly was from Naples. In 1728, he came out with his new synthesis which he entitled *Filosofia* which he explained as being derived from Plato.³⁶ No place of publication is mentioned, and if Doria's later account is reliable, it was printed in Geneva; this would make it Doria's only publication that was actually printed abroad. Doria was advocating nothing less than an abandonment of the moderns in order to embrace the ancients.

Doria had an eye for novelty, despite his ever increasing devotion to ancient philosophy; at the end of the 1720s he encountered the traditions of Chinese academic culture. The evidence is circumstantial but it is likely that he came into contact with Chinese priests who were being trained in Naples. The Chinese had been brought to Naples by Matteo Ripa who founded the *Collegio dei Cinesi*. Ripa wrote a fascinating account of his life and of his missionary work; it was not published until 1832.³⁷ Ripa, born in Eboli in 1682, led a very secular life until 1700 when he heard a sermon delivered by a Franciscan in front of the Viceregal Palace. But the decisive event for him was in May, 1701 when he first confessed to Antonio Torres, who was admired by Vico and was Giannone's spiritual adviser.³⁸

³⁵ On the deists see, Peter Byrne, *Natural religion and the nature of religion: the legacy of deism* (NY: Routledge, 1989), chapters 1-3, pp. 53-88.

³⁶ Paolo Mattia Doria, *Filosofia con la quale si schiarisca quella di Platone* (1728), 2 vol.

³⁷ Matteo Ripa, *Storia della fondazione della Congregazione e del Collegio de' Cinesi* (Napoli: Manfredi, 1832), 3 v. See also Michele Fatica, "Prolegomeni ad un discorso storico su Matteo Ripa" in *La conoscenza dell'Asia e dell'Africa in Italia nei secoli XVIII e XIX*, ed. Ugo Marazzi, 171-209.

³⁸ Antonio de Torres, *Delle opere del V.P. D. Antonio de Torres*, ed. Lodovico Sabbatini d'Anafora (Napoli: Carlo Salzano & Francesco Castaldo, 1752).

After a short acquaintanceship with Torres, Ripa decided to join his order, the Pious Workers. Torres suggested that he consider the mission in China and in 1708 he left Rome, via London, for China. Ripa said he knew nothing of China at that time.

To guarantee the continuance of Christianity in China it was thought important to train Chinese priests. And to avoid the charge of laxness in their education, the priests would be schooled in Italy. Ripa returned to found a Congregation in Naples. In 1727 he was living with five Chinese priests in Naples at Mergellina. The establishment of the Congregation which was to be called the College of the Holy Family got involved in a complicated jurisdictional dispute. Rome demanded the right to examine the professors at the college, but the Neapolitan government refused seeing this as a violation of its sovereignty. But finally the differences were worked out and in July of 1732 the Congregation officially opened.

The Chinese priests were not cloistered and attended major religious celebrations like the liquification of San Gennaro's blood, dressed in Chinese style clothing. The popular reaction was to presume that these strange visitors must be Turks. Doria gave no indication as to where his information about China came from, but it was after the return of Ripa that praise of Chinese Mandarins enters his work. Doria was always eager to find new support for his philosophical hobby-horses; and, besides the ancient republics, the other model he saw for the restoration of virtue in Europe became China. He believed that the government of an emperor whose actions were restrained by a class of officials, such as the mandarins who were all trained in Confucianism, came very close to Plato's Republic. Instead of lawyers or aristocrats, philosophers or at least academics were responsible for public business.

Doria, whose mind was attuned to new trends, had already sensed a shift away from Descartes and the growing popularity of Locke's philosophy. But to Doria, Locke was just as bad and perhaps worse than Descartes. In 1732-33 he published, using the false place of publication of Venice, a work entitled *Difesa della metafisica degli antichi contro il Signor Giovanni Locke* (Defense of ancient metaphysics against John Locke). In this work Doria besides attempting to show the inadequacy of Locke's description of the operations of the mind, he also continued his attack against Descartes. Doria also attacked Berkeley whose principles, he argued, made it impossible to distinguish the mental operations of man from the animals; and his whole

approach denied the existence of metaphysical entities. Doria concluded by praising Galileo as the philosophic hero. He was convinced he had united the precepts of classical republicanism with Christianity. In contrast to Vico who having surveyed the political scene of the 1730s concluded that aristocratic regimes were gradually disappearing or being destroyed by invidious monarchs; Doria made an impassioned plea for a return to the city-states of the ancients. It was only by such radical reform that Doria believed Europe would be able to attain true virtue. The early Doria, one might say, pointed confusedly in the direction of Montesquieu, the late Doria gesticulated wildly but ineffectively towards some of the idealism of Rousseau.

Gessari, however, did not promote these later works of Doria, but kept his *La vita civile* in print. It is interesting to compare Doria's eclecticism with Giambattista Capasso's history of philosophy.³⁹ Capasso and Doria were the only two contemporary philosophers included on Gessari's book list. Giambattista Capasso was the younger brother of Niccolo who played an important role at the Medina Coeli. His work follows the general pattern of other such histories that were appearing all over Europe. His work has certain traits identified in Valletta's history, but it has scarce any of Vico's interest in showing how philosophy arose from particular social and political conditions. While he does not discuss Locke in detail, he was supportive of Hobbes and a strong promoter of Newton and the Newtonians.⁴⁰ In June of 1734 a surprising blow came from Rome: John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* was put on the Index; *The Reasonableness of Christianity* was to join it in 1737. Doria, perhaps, felt vindicated. Vico behaved as he did in the time of the attacks on the Cartesians in the mid 1720s; he suppressed the negative remarks he had made about Locke when he prepared the third edition of *Scienza nuova*.

³⁹ Giambattista Capasso, *Historiae philosophiae synopsis* (Napoli: Felice Mosca, 1728). See Giuseppe Ricuperati's "Capasso, Giambattista", *Dizionario biografico italiano* 18, 396–397; and Paola Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di Antonio Genovesi* (Napoli: Marano, 1972), 95–104.

⁴⁰ Gregorio Piaia, "Giambattista Capasso" in *Dall'età cartesiana a Brucker*, ed. Francesco Bottin, Mario Longo and Gregorio Piaia (Brescia: La Scuola, 1979), 306–321.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

CODAS AND LAST WORKS

My intention with this chapter is to conclude the careers of the Neapolitans I have been discussing. They were all old men by the 1730s; Paolo de Matteis had died in 1728; Solimena lived until 1747. De Domenici made Solimena the culminating figure of his biographical history of Neapolitan artists. Solimena's last grand work was the fresco commissioned for Il Gesù, his subsequent works which included many portraits were on a smaller scale. Sometime in 1722 he was hired by the Jesuits to paint a large fresco over the main entrance of their church. He finished the work in 1725 and its title is "The Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple". The story is taken from Second Maccabees; the work is controversial, and some dismiss it as a failure. Even De Dominici, who typically admired any work of Solimena, was critical and reported the negative comments made concerning this piece. Romeo De Maio considers it as the last great statement of the Counter-Reformation.¹ The painting, an imposing work, depicts the moment when a miraculous horseman appears in the company of angels driving Heliodorus, the pagan tax collector, out of the Temple in Jerusalem. Despite the violent action going on in the center of the painting there are a number of Hebrews, De Dominici notes, just ambling around the temple area, oblivious to the central drama. They seem not to notice that precious treasures have been forcibly taken from the sanctuary, and that soldiers appear to be violating the Holy of Holies. What was lacking was a tension to draw the viewer back into the central drama. De Dominici said that the work was criticized because it lacked an all encompassing story or single narrative.

In 1725, when the painting was finished, it would have been easy to have made the Heliodorus = Giannone/Grimaldi connection. Solimena's painted narrative would suggest that even such violent expulsions don't count for much anymore. The idolator was driven out,

¹ De Dominici, *Vite de' pittori*, 3, 591–92; Romeo De Maio, *Pittura e controriforma a Napoli* (Bari: Laterza, 1983), p. 5.

heaven raged, but did it really mean that much? Giannone had found a comfortable sinecure in Vienna and Grimaldi continued in his position in the judiciary. This is one way of reading the indifference of the bystanders in the painting. If we compare this to my earlier argument concerning the San Domenico Maggiore ceiling, in that case it was the spectator who would have to provide the irony to reflect on the limitations of ecclesiastical power. At *Il Gesù*, the irony needed to call that power into question was placed in the picture itself. A viewer might conclude that displays of ecclesiastical violence cannot rouse or unify the community. The people are simply unaware or don't care about the issue of preserving ecclesiastical revenues from taxation. While one may read the painting as an allegory concerning what happens to those who try to tax the Church, the painting can also be seen to promote a firm distinction between ecclesiastical and civil history.

De Dominici was fairly removed from the friends of Giannone. Instead he acknowledged the influence of Vico, and they both used the same ecclesiastical approver, Giulio Torno. Like Agnellus of Ravenna De Dominici had to rely on oral tradition and visual evidence, and he too felt the confidence to fabricate the appropriate details when evidence was lacking.² De Dominici was particularly concerned with matters of individual style and concentrated on describing the surface aspect of a painting. On occasion he will adopt Valletta's approach and emphasize the relation of teacher and student, but he had also learned from Vico to look for patterns and cycles in artistic development.

Pietro Giannone: the Tragic End

In the spring of 1734, Vienna was full of ominous warnings, at least that was what Giannone remembered. Already in 1733, it seemed clear that Austria would fail to pull itself together in the face of a dynamic France which was taking an active role on the issue of the who was to rule in Poland.³ The problem was simple enough; Poland

² Ferdinando Bologna, "De Dominici, Bernardo" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 33, 619-628.

³ Pietro Giannone, *Vita scritta da lui medesimo*, ed. Sergio Bertelli (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1960), 195-198, 208-210, 222-234.

needed a king. In February of 1733, the King of Poland, Augustus II had died. Stanislaus Lesczynski, who had ruled as king from 1704–1709 under the auspices of Sweden had a claim to the throne; this time he was father-in-law to Louis XV, and expected substantial support from the French. While they gave him support, Poland was very far away and there were other things France wanted to do in a war against Austria. The War of the Polish Succession is scarcely remembered today; historians describe the war as a kind of “market correction” after the major diplomatic and territorial shifts and reshufflings brought about by the War of the Spanish Succession. But for those who were caught up in it, it was another matter. This was the first big international conflict since the War of the Spanish Succession.⁴ In 1733 a French and Piedmontese army moved on Milan; they would occupy the city, at least for a while. The French massed on the Rhine and there was a flurry of military activity in Poland.

All of this seemed to have caught the Austrians by surprise and nothing went well for them. The greatest shock for Giannone came in the spring of 1734 when a Spanish army, having secured its position in Parma, beat the Austrians in the battlefield, making it possible for them to move on southern Italy. In consequence, Charles of Bourbon, with Spanish troops, successfully subdued Naples, and proclaimed himself Carlo III. Suddenly Naples was an independent kingdom, and while Austria might have continued his employment, Giannone chose to try to return to Naples. He hoped to serve the Neapolitan king in a similar capacity as he had done in Vienna. Many Italian advisers made the same decision; granted they were employees of the enemy, still there were ways of squaring that. The easiest approach was to go to a neutral state and make an appeal for readmission and perhaps employment. Giannone joined many of his compatriots by making the journey to Venice. He believed that from there he might be able to obtain a passport; while several who travelled with him received permission, this was denied Giannone. Still, he acquired a substantial following in Venice, and wealthy citizens were eager to create a chair for him at the University. Hoping for a different response from Naples, he postponed accepting the honor. During his year in Venice he may have continued work on *Il triregno*,

⁴ John L. Sutton, *The King's Honor and the King's Cardinal: The War of the Polish Succession* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1980).

but we don't know for sure. On a September evening in 1735, while returning to his residence, he was surrounded by an armed gang in the pay of the Venetian Inquisition. He was arrested and after a summary trial was expelled from the Serene Republic. Taken by boat with a few possessions he was marooned on the banks of the Po on the Ferrara side, a Papal province.⁵ Disguising himself, he managed to avoid Papal agents and made the trip to Modena where he met with Muratori.

He travelled on to Milan, but the city was still under the control of the French and Piedmontese. They could only regard with suspicion a former employee of their enemy; and the fact that he had been denied a return to Naples did not speak in his favor. At the end of November he was ordered out of Milan. He promptly left, stopping briefly in Turin on his way to Geneva, which he reached on December 5. Geneva still had the reputation of being a place where Catholics would convert to Protestantism, but, while no official Catholic ministry was permitted there, Catholics were tolerated and left alone. Going there made sense because he knew that Jacques Vernet, a Genevan, was interested in arranging for a translation of parts of the *Istoria* for use at the University of Lausanne. Vernet and Turretini, a professor in Geneva, welcomed Giannone and his son Giovanni. He associated with the leading scholars at the university and came into contact with the printer Marc Michel Bousquet.

Giannone might well have found a convenient intellectual niche here. However, he fell into a complicated web of interests connecting the ambitions and desires of Rome and the Savoyard rulers of Turin. Giannone was befriended by Giuseppe Gastaldi, who gave him the impression of having genuine interest in his well-being. Having learned that Giannone had no desire of converting to Protestantism, Gastaldi assured him that he would gladly help him fulfill his Easter duty by taking him to a church in adjacent Savoy. Giannone, believing the plans to be sound, travelled with him; but on the eve of Palm Sunday, Gastaldi handed him over to soldiers of the King of Savoy. He was imprisoned at Chambery, and later was transferred

⁵ Pietro Giannone, *Vita scritta da lui medesimo*, 247–288; and Pietro Giannone, “Ragguaglio dell'improvviso e violento ratto praticato in Venezia ad istigazione de'Gesuiti e della Corte di Roma nella persona dell'avvocato Pietro Giannone” in *Opere di Pietro Giannone*, ed. Sergio Bertelli and Giuseppe Ricuperati, *La Letteratura Italiana*, v. 46, 1, *Illuministi Italiani*, v. 1 (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1971), 507–554.

to Turin.⁶ Though imprisoned Giannone adopted a bold strategy in the hopes of gaining his freedom. He understood he was the prisoner of Savoy and that he would not be sent to Rome. What he had to offer was *Il triregno*; his problem was how to use it to gain his release. The draft was still in Geneva, but the most challenging part remained only in Giannone's mind. He needed his freedom and access to an excellent library to complete it. Given the opportunity, he believed he could explain the spiritual and temporal origin and subsequent history of Papal power. Giannone's analysis was based on his understanding of natural right. He regarded the principles of natural right as simple and invariable; they were the source of all human custom and the simplicity of its operation was a sign of God's governance of the world. The so-called laws of nature were conclusions drawn from these unchanging rights; these laws were deductions of reasons, expressions of opinion and even the passions of men. Hence, he concluded, one should not be surprised that claims about natural law were often contradictory.⁷ Giannone, following *i novelli politici* of the Medina Coeli, concluded that natural law rightly understood applied equally to men and animals. With these principles he believed he could make clear not only the meaning of Scripture and also interpret the genuine limits of papal authority.

It was with this in mind that Giannone promptly wrote an autobiography in 1736 and he sent a copy to the King. It seems, he had a genuine hope that he might be freed and allowed to work on behalf of the sovereign power of Turin.⁸ His situation, of course, left him no options, and he may have thought a long shot was better than none. What was at stake was the completion of *Il triregno*, but despite its potential his captors chose not to allow Giannone the freedom he requested. Perhaps, too, hostility with Rome over Giannone and his books seemed more trouble than the benefit a sovereign might obtain from being Giannone's patron. Turin chose to keep Giannone

⁶ Pietro Giannone, *Vita scritta da lui medesimo*, 319–334.

⁷ Pietro Giannone, *Il triregno*, 1, 138. Giuseppe Ricuperati confirms that the concern about natural right was predominant in his prison writings; Giuseppe Ricuperati, “‘Istoria civile’ e storia ecclesiastica in Pietro Giannone”, *Bollettino della società di studi valdesi* (1963), 114, 38.

⁸ This analysis was not simply wishful thinking; Lodovica Braidà, “L’affermazione della censura di stato in Piemonte dall’editto del 1648 alle costituzioni per l’Università del 1772”, *Rivista storica italiana*, 1990, 102, 717–795, on Giannone see p. 750, for the complexities of the situation and the new cultural climate of the 1730s in Turin, see, 732–763.

a prisoner but provided him with a limited number of books so that he could continue writing.

Il triregno managed to get some manuscript circulation but it never became the weapon Giannone intended it to be. Rome was perhaps satisfied with the arrangement that made Turin responsible for holding Giannone. Rome understood it was dealing with a new kind of opponent in the 1730s and there is a possibility that Giannone's arrest was involved with the growing hostility to the Freemasons. There is no definite evidence linking Giannone to the Freemasons, but some of his Viennese associates and his research projects reflected the interests of the radical enlightenment. What the Roman authorities knew about *Il triregno*, as opposed to what they feared it to be, is not clear. And, while repression always has a simplisitic and appealing logic of its own, the absence of Giannone's voice had the practical effect of making official Catholic attitudes appear only in sharp contrast to the radical enlightenment. Giannone was not an atheist or a republican, but these extreme views were the only ones to be heard in Italy except the more conservative path of Muratori and Maffei. Giannone might be classed a libertine, but he had a genuine piety that distinguished him from John Toland. His religious thought was a mixture of practical politics and, a simple morality combined with strange bits of mysticism.

Giannone's autobiography failed to persuade his captors that it would be to their advantage to let him continue his scholarly research. His veiled advertisement of *Il triregno* and his abjuration of his works proved insufficient to obtain his release. In a spirit of defiance Giannone took up his old theme, the relation of religion and civil society and wrote a commentary on Livy. He finished this work in 1739. He requested that it be sent on to the King; at this time Giannone must have concluded there was no chance of freedom. His next work was what must have been intended as major chunks of the last section of *Il triregno*, *Del regno papale*. First, he wrote *Apologia de'teologi scolastici* (Apology for scholastic theology) which concerned the origins of the beliefs of the Church Fathers. The complete manuscript has never been published; Ricuperati, who has studied it, has analyzed the history of its composition and has summarized its contents.⁹ Ricuperati believed this work was, for Giannone's intellectual

⁹ Pietro Giannone, *Opere*, 791–911. Giuseppe Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone* (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1970), 564–81.

development, the most significant work he wrote in prison. Giannone's next major work, *Istoria del Pontificato di Gregorio Magno* (History of the Pontificate of Gregory the Great) gives a further idea of what *Il triregno* might have contained.¹⁰ While Giannone had been challenged by the ideas of the deists and libertines in Vienna, he had concluded that the religious spirit could not be explained by Anglican rationalism, or the motives of low cunning. He believed that religion responded to genuine human needs, and that religious practices changed as it sought to meet these needs. The way to understand Christianity was in comparison with other religious traditions. The manuscript's final chapter was an outline of the kind of research needed to provide a genuine ecclesiastical history; he described the kind of comparative approach to the world religions he believed was needed for this study. But in prison, the library resources were inadequate to do anymore than suggest the line of research to be followed.

Giannone's final work, *L'ape ingegnosa* (The Busy Bee) was a collection of essays on topics from the sceptical tradition; several deal with the relation of animal and human intelligence. Giannone finished this in 1744. Giannone died in the citadel of Turin on March 17, 1748. His last works are a powerful testament to his spirit and his passion to write for his contemporaries. In the 1720s Giannone had written works destined for publication; he produced others that were only intended for manuscript circulation. These manuscripts were for a select and selected audience. But his final works had no audience except his son and his confessor, though he must have had some expectation of possible future readers. These writings, per force, were private documents and outside the public sphere of intellectual exchange. *Il triregno* left small traces but the prison writings were all but unknown to contemporaries.¹¹ In Naples, by 1736, Damiano Romano, could safely refer to him as the "great author of *The Civil History*" and to quote him as a source.¹² In 1741 Bernardo Tanucci, Naples' prime minister, advising on a reading curriculum for a young Floren-

¹⁰ This text was printed by Mancini in 1859; Ricuperati, who studied the manuscript, found this published text completely inadequate and based his selection in Giannone's *Opere* on the manuscript, see his note on p. 933. Giuseppe Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone*, 581–591.

¹¹ Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Pietro Giannone: Bilancio storiografico e prospettive di ricerca" in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo*, 185–249, on *Il triregno*, 199–210.

¹² Damiano Romano, *Difesa istorica delle leggi greche venute in Roma* (Napoli: Migliaccio, 1736).

tine insisted that *Istoria civile* be included.¹³ Giannone had become the author of one big, important book; it is only in recent years that we have begun to see him in his real complexity.

Grimaldi's Posthumous Work on Witchcraft

Costantino Grimaldi did not fair well under the administration of Carlo III. He was forced to retire from his post in the judiciary when Carlo reorganized Naples' major courts.¹⁴ Grimaldi was just 70, the age at which according to some, jurists begin to mature. The details aren't completely clear but later in the War of the Austrian Succession he was accused of dealing with the enemy. Whatever indiscretion he had committed resulted in a temporary house arrest; his son Gregorio served some time in prison.¹⁵ At the very end of his life, in his mid 80s Grimaldi became interested in a controversy begun in 1749 in northern Italy concerning witchcraft. This was started by Girolamo Tartarotti who had begun his publishing career with his edition of Valletta in 1732. His project was a bold one for his aim seems to have been to approach witchcraft using the categories of Galilean science; that is, he separated his study from any theological teaching concerning the nature of evil. Scipione Maffei was one of the most prestigious supporter of this rationalist approach.

Grimaldi's *Dissertazione* was published posthumously in Rome in 1751, and may have been altered by its editor; Grimaldi died in 1750.¹⁶ The work took a middle of the road view on the possibility of demonic intervention in the world. His sources indicated his wide and liberal reading. He neither affirmed or denied the absolute impossibility of black magic; he cautiously asserted that there are no fixed rules to determine whether an effect is from natural or demonic causes.¹⁷ Grimaldi attacked superstitions, but he did not deny the genuine possibility of supernatural action. In certain cases he believed that while natural causes could explain an apparently miraculous event,

¹³ Bernardo Tanucci, *Epistolario*, ed. R.P. Coppini, L. Del Bianco, R. Nieri (Roma: Storia e letteratura, 1980), 1, 510 (letter 383, 12/8/1741, to Corsini).

¹⁴ Pasquale Sposato, *Le "lettere provinciali" di Biagio Pascal*, 76–77.

¹⁵ Bernardo Tanucci, *Epistolario*, v. 1, 721–4 and note 7 (letter 503).

¹⁶ Costantino Grimaldi, *Dissertazione in cui si investiga quali siano le operazioni che dependono della magia diabolica e quelle che derivano dalla magia naturale e artificiale* (Roma: Pagliarini, 1751). Pagliarini later published anti-Jesuit works.

¹⁷ Franco Venturi, *Settecento riformatore*, 1, 32, 85, 358–385.

it would be morally proper to recognize supernatural action as well. In this respect Grimaldi supported a version of Spinoza's position that the essential evidence for the specialness of the Bible was its moral teaching. Thus, Grimaldi still saw relevance in what he had written in his refutation of Benedetti's *Lettere*. This was his first published work since his printing fiasco of the 1720s and it was a last attempt to establish his place in his scholarly community and to show his value to orthodox religion.

Vico's Third Edition of Scienza nuova

Unlike Grimaldi, Vico was to benefit from the arrival of Carlo at Naples. The change in dynasty furnished him many opportunities for celebratory poetry, orations and inscriptions. More important was his appointment in 1735 as Royal Historiographer which carried with it a stipend of 100 ducats a year. Celebrating in poetry the events of the King's life brought in extra income as well. And, in 1741 Vico was able to insure that his son Gennaro would inherit his teaching position at the University. Vico's major project during these years was the preparation of third and final edition of *Scienza nuova*. Most of these changes were handwritten in his copy of the second edition; he used a notebook for more substantive changes. He left the fundamental structure of the second edition intact. I will only discuss two of the changes: the first gave a new slant to his conception of science; the second amplified his claims concerning his method of imaginative universals.

Vico believed the proofs of his science were so strong that it could be applied universally, and that meant to worlds differently constituted from our own. To phrase it less elliptically, no matter what one's theological presuppositions might be, his science would have the same utility. As he stated it, the proofs of his science would be the same "even if from eternity, infinite worlds were born from time to time, which is certainly contrary to the facts."¹⁸ One such imaginary world would be one with no Hebrews, another would be that of Isaac la Peyrère's hypothesis of the pre-Adamites.¹⁹ La Peyrère

¹⁸ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, p. 467 (# 348). In *De Antiquissima* he had also alluded to the possibility of infinite worlds.

¹⁹ Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac la Peyrère (1596–1676): his life, work and influence* (NY:

had argued that there were two creation stories, one concerning all humanity, and another for the Hebrews. And accordingly, Adam was not the founder of the human race but only the first Hebrew. Among his conclusions from this hypothesis was that Noah's Flood was a local one, and it did not engulf the entire earth.²⁰ In the third edition Vico, when discussing the pre-Adamite hypothesis, added a passage in the paragraph following his dismissal of La Peyrère's view; in the addition he described Adam as the founder of the Hebrews.²¹ Abraham was traditionally assigned this role; while such a statement about Adam is loosely correct, to make it in the context of refuting La Peyrère asks to be noticed. But such references should not rush us to proclaim that Vico was a clandestine believer in the pre-Adamites. From the context of these remarks in his text, the general principles of his work, and his character such a conclusion is difficult to justify. In keeping with the general direction of his thought a better description might be that even in the possible world of the pre-Adamites his theory of nations would hold. Vico may have seen the issue of probable worlds in the same way that Newton presented his laws of nature as being capable of describing planetary systems in which gravitational attraction varied inversely with distance, directly with it, or in any other proportion.

In the universe Vico investigated there were Hebrews and gentiles; to make sense of that universe, it was necessary to deny that the gentiles had access to esoteric or Hebrew wisdom. Hebrew history could be accepted literally, but gentile history needed to be interpreted through his method. In another universe what one did with Hebrew history might well be different. If my explanation about his allusion to La Peyrère is correct, Vico was tacitly asserting that his science would be true even in the counterfactual world of the pre-Adamites. The orthodox view of Hebrew priority would lose all credit if La Peyrère could be proven correct, Vico's work would be unaffected. Vico's science would be true whether or not Hebrew

Brill, 1987), 91–92 concerns Vico. See also, Richard H. Popkin, "The development of religious scepticism and the influence of Isaac la Peyrère's pre-Adamism and Bible criticism" in *Classical influences on European culture AD 1500–1700*, ed. R.R. Bolgar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

²⁰ Paolo Rossi, *Le sterminate antichità: studi vichiani* (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1969), chapter 3, 133–165.

²¹ G. Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, p. 410, (# 51); the parallel passage would have been on p. 105 of the second edition of *Scienza nuova*. His manuscript addition can be found in BNN MSS XIII B 30, 15r.

scripture was an historically accurate account of humanity's early history; and the authority of his science would not be effected by the resolution of this issue.

Vico's Encounter with Spinoza

There were some alterations to the third edition that Vico must have communicated by verbal instruction. One of these was to change the axiom that read *L'ordine dell'idee umane dee procedere secondo l'ordine delle cose umane* (the order of human ideas ought to proceed according to the order human things) to *L'ordine dell'idee dee procedere secondo l'ordine delle cose* (the order of ideas ought to proceed according to the order of things).²² Vico had made a traditional use of this notion in his *Il diritto universale* when he defined the true to be the conforming of the mind with the order of things (*verum gignit mentis cum rerum ordine conformatio*).²³ Understanding was a kind of perception. But in the third *Scienza nuova* the order of ideas, that is how ideas are formed, replaced the true as being the primary concern of his investigation. This final formulation was a direct translation and a homage, of sorts, to the enunciation of a proposition in Spinoza's *Ethics*, Book II, Proposition 7: "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things".

Book II, Proposition 7, was a crucial one for Spinoza's system; from it he went on to deduce that mind and body were modifications of one simple substance. This conclusion is presented as a corollary to this proposition. This was the infamous idea that had been highlighted in the chronological table at the end of Aulisio's *Delle scuole sacre* and that Doria had discovered while reading Descartes' *Meditations*. Vico, of course, did not acknowledge his source. In his explication of his proposition Spinoza claimed that no one knew the precise limits of the body's natural power. He cited the example of somnambulists who are amazed and express disbelief at what they were capable of in their sleep. Spinoza's general point is clear, though his example of sleep walking is not very compelling.

²² Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche, Scienza nuova*, 3rd ed., (# 238), p. 447. The passage in the second edition is on p. 152; I used as my copy BNN MSS XIII H 59. I found no revision notes in either Vico's copy or his notebook (BNN MSS XIII B 30) for this passage.

²³ Giambattista Vico, *Opere giuridiche*, 35, 47.

Vico gave this idea a vitality that Spinoza did not imagine. Vico believed that heroic poetry, language and legislation all reflected the creative power of bodily sensation, at least as it was experienced in archaic times. He used Spinoza's proposition to summarize and introduce his ideas that our mental concepts are the spontaneous result of an historical process, a natural process that does not require the application of distinctions from logic or from an arbitrary act of definition.²⁴ As his example Vico presents the history of the concept *lex*, tracing it from a collection of acorns (*ilex*) to laws ratified in an assembly.²⁵ The origin of the word *lex* was metaphorical, as were all mental concepts. Vico contended that modern scientific disciplines had their counterpart and origin in the imaginative understanding of men of the Age of Gods and of Heroes.

Vico's approach to the problems of concept formation were one of the most imaginative and lasting of his contributions to the methods of the human sciences. He was aware of the novelty of this project and mentioned it as one of the central features of the allegorical picture that preceeds his science. While philosophers had previously studied what he called private morality, his aim was to study public morality. His concern was to describe the different cultural expressions of nations. Having identified what is common in the development of nations, his science focused on what was individual in each nation. The fundamental similarities between the early Roman Republic and archaic Greece could be seen by comparing the composition of the Law of the XII Tables, and of the Homeric poems. In both cases the essence of these phenomena would be obscured if it was presumed that Appius and a small group of colleagues wrote the Tables, or if it was believed that a specific individual, Homer, composed the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Vico believed that true particularity and individuality of style could only be perceived at the level of the nation.

This method of analysis ran counter to the philosophic conventions of his time. Spinoza reflected the traditional view in his *Theological-*

²⁴ Although Leibniz ended up denying Spinoza's proposition, it had an important function in the development of his idea of the preestablished harmony. See, Mark A. Kulstad, "Causation and preestablished harmony in the early development of Leibniz's philosophy" in *Causation in early modern philosophy: Cartesianism, occasionalism and preestablished harmony*, ed. Steven Nadler (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 93–117, esp. 98, 108–110. Kulstad argues that part of Leibniz's rejection of Spinoza's principle is for the sake of spontaneity in substances; Vico redefined that proposition for the same end.

²⁵ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, p. 447 (# 240).

Political Treatise when he wrote “nature forms individuals, not peoples; the latter are only distinguishable by the difference of their language, their customs, and their laws”.²⁶ Spinoza accepted the traditional distinction between nature and convention and believed the separation of humanity into different nations was artificial. The specific differences between peoples was the product of chance and arbitrary decisions; such attributes, while they could be described and studied, were not amenable to scientific analysis. On the contrary, Vico considered language, law and custom to be spontaneous expressions of feeling, a judgement without reflection, what he called *il senso comune*, common sense. Common sense, he believed, revealed the true character of an age. It would be impossible to verify judgements made without reflection by examining a single individual or abstract notion of a human being. Vico’s science created symbolic types, conceptions like Achilles, Homer or Solon as corporate spokesmen for these feelings.²⁷ While some have the name of historical personages, their function was to focus the characteristics that represent a particular epoch, not a specific personality.

Vico believed the most exciting result of this kind of analysis was what he called his “Discovery of the true Homer”, a distinctive accomplishment of the second edition. Previous philosophers had presumed Homer was a single individual of philosophic and poetic genius; but this assumption made a coherent interpretation of his epics impossible. Vico presented his argument in the same form as he presented his science. If Homer was a creative genius and a man of profound learning, than there was no way of making coherent sense of the errors of his poems; if we deny Homer’s philosophic wisdom and abandon the idea that artistic creativity can only come from an individual mind, then we can discover the common sense of the Heroic Greeks. Homer, in Vico’s view, was not a single individual but a creation of the Greek heroic mind; this insight enabled him to understand the true unity of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This unity was not literary but social and political; the epics reflected the gradual changes typical of all heroic commonwealths. Homer was not so much a specific author but the concept of an author.

²⁶ Benedict Spinoza, *The Complete Works*, 1, 232.

²⁷ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, p. 448 (# 243).

Naples' New Homer: The Career of Pergolesi

Pergolesi was born in 1710, came to Naples for advanced training and wrote his first opera in 1731. By 1736 he was dead having written a sacred drama, four *opera seria*—two with intermezzi, two comic operas, several instrumental pieces and numerous other secular and sacred works. Pergolesi had studied with Francesco Durante, and with Vinci.²⁸ Vinci's style shaped that of Pergolesi. His arias, like those of Vinci, were of substantial length; his duets were playful, engaging and made striking usage of modulations for dramatic effect. His frequent switches from major to minor added musical interest to his work. As Rousseau wrote in his *Dictionnaire de Musique, la modulation est toujours bonne* (modulation is always good). Pergolesi managed to convey an intense range of emotion in his music that responded to the sensitivity and sensibility sought by audiences. His *opera seria* arias convey a feeling of intensity, playing at the edge of hysteria; his comic writing contains wholesome and good-humored pleasure at some moments, at others it evokes the winsome as well as the melancholy. The simplicity of certain aspects of his style, the wistful longing of certain melodies seemed to open a whole range of feelings for his listeners. Burney remarked of his music that "greater and more beautiful effects are often produced in performance than are promised in the score."²⁹

None of Pergolesi's contemporaries were to capture the imagination of Europeans in the same way. Not even Leonardo Leo, composer of operas as well as a variety of sacred and secular music, matched Pergolesi's posthumous popularity. Even Leo's picturesque death—he was found slumped over his harpsichord as if asleep—gave him a comparable reputation. In the eighteenth century Pergolesi's most widely known work was an intermezzo *La serva padrona*. It prepared the way for his posthumous reputation.

The famous *guerre des bouffons*, which pitted the Italian musical style against the French, was perhaps the most intense cultural controversy in the mid-eighteenth century.³⁰ Pergolesi was introduced to Paris by

²⁸ Helmut Huckle, "Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista", in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 14, 394–400, and Helmut Huckle, and Dale Monson, *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, 3, 951–956.

²⁹ Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, 2, 923.

³⁰ Cynthia Verba, *Music and the French enlightenment: reconstruction of a dialogue 1750–1764* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 10–15, 68–70.

an Italian touring company named *Les Bouffons* who specialized in intermezzi; by far the most popular item in their repertoire was Pergolesi's *La serva padrona*. The success of Pergolesi in Paris had perhaps as much to do with the qualities of the piece as with what certain listeners and musicians thought music ought to mean. Pergolesi's style conveyed to them a slightly melancholic sentimentality, but at the same time, counterbalanced this with the delight in playing a role and the comic impulse that underlies artificiality. The work had its first Paris performance on August 1, 1752, and already by the end of October, Rousseau was working to get a copy of the score into print. The *philosophes* were enchanted by this magical Neapolitan music; Pergolesi was all the rage.

While Pergolesi had been very productive there just wasn't enough music to satisfy the demand; the easiest way to solve the problem was to create the needed music. Quantities were produced and the impostors were difficult to identify; most music was only available in manuscript and there was no ready way to check its authenticity. Even in the early twentieth century a couple of "new" pieces were added to Pergolesi's works. They were created by the remarkable forger Tobia Nicotra. This con artist, among other acts of fraud, toured the United States in 1932 directing a small orchestra claiming to be the ballet composer Ricardo Drigo, who in fact had died in 1930.³¹ The enthusiasm for Pergolesi basically ended with the eighteenth century but it had completely transformed the image of Naples. Naples was no longer perceived as the potential source of future Masaniellos, but had become the home of the wistful singer, the happy beggar, a place of exquisite sensations.

Over 300 works have been attributed to Pergolesi, but modern scholarly investigation have been only able verify 30-some as being by him. While he was unlike Homer in that everyone knew his birthplace, Pergolesi was the prototype of the Italian or Neapolitan musician. His life was short; his death tragic; his genius was destroyed just as it began to flower; and his music could be produced by the culture which needed it. Until Mozart displaced him, his life was the model for a composer's career; his "style" told the age what it wanted to feel and learn from music. A testament of sorts of the apparent artistic unity of the eighteenth-century's spontaneous creation of

³¹ Barry S. Brook, "Pergolesi: Research, Publication and Performance" in *Pergolesi Studies/Studi Pergolesiani* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1986).

"Pergolesi" is Stravinsky's ballet *Pulcinella* of 1920, one of his early experiments with the neoclassical style.³² Stravinsky believed that the "fragments" he brought together for this piece were all from the hand of Pergolesi, though subsequent research has shown that over half were by various pseudo-Pergolesis. We live close enough to the time of their composition that musicologists have been able to identify the forgers. The Vichian musicologist would also want to study how each "Pergolesi" expressed in musical form the imaginative universals of their age.

*How Doria's Defense of the Ancients Enraged both
the Church and the State*

During the early 1730s Doria reached the height of his local fame. Indicative of this was his role in the establishment of a new academy called the *Oziosi* (the Slothful); this body was created to compete, or perhaps to complete, the work of Celestino Galiani's *Accademia degli Scienze* (Academy of the Sciences) which had been founded in 1732. There was a third academy operating in Naples that was directed by Giuseppe Rossi which addressed primarily ecclesiastical concerns. Galiani's academy was devoted to scientific experimentation, while the *Oziosi* reflected the older academic ideal of the unity of knowledge. From the evidence that remains this organization reflected Doria's values and beliefs. This Academy was founded in 1733 under the patronage of Niccolò Maria Salerno; Doria, and Giuseppe Pascale Cirillo were the leaders and organizers of the Academy. Cirillo, the friend of Vico and Giannone, was a strong advocate of Cartesianism. Among the members was Domenico Barone, a writer for the comic stage who in the 1740s had the position of royal Comedian.³³ To view the *Oziosi* as a reactionary group, a supporter of the Ancients in opposition to the Moderns represented by Galiani's group, is an oversimplification of their relationship. Instead of Ancients and Moderns, the conflict has more of the elements of the Leibniz/Newton, or the

³² It may not be irrelevant to note that during the 1740s the Neapolitan actor and librettist Domenico Antonio di Fiore gave new life to the role of Pulcinella. Roberta Ascarelli, "Di Fiore, Domenico Antonio" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 40, 9–11.

³³ The *Oziosi* dedicated a volume to him in which Vico was a participant. Franca Angelini, "Barone, Domenico Luigi", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 6, 448–449.

Descartes/Locke controversies that were part of the European scholarly debates of the 1720s and 1730s.³⁴ Mosca seemed to have become the printer for those associated with Galiani; Vocola did work for those associated with the *Oziosi*.

Unfortunately the lectures of the *Oziosi* were not preserved by a Sersale. We possess only a few of the lectures, but we know the authors and titles of all those lectures delivered, or at least planned. From this evidence a few indications can be gleaned. Women were allowed to participate; priests, even Jesuits gave papers. There were members of the nobility as well as University faculty. The subject matter of the papers was quite different from that of the *Medina Coeli*. For the year 1734 scarcely any have what seems an historical subject; almost a third concern religion and the Bible; a quarter address issues of the law; and about 15% deal with philosophical topics. Unlike the *Medina Coeli*, members of the *Oziosi* did not go on to brilliant careers: some had already made a name for themselves but the rest did not become major figures in Bourbon Naples. While we know that Vico was associated with this Academy, he gave no papers from 1733 to 1735. Nor does one find Egizio, Mazzocchi, or Gregorio Grimaldi as members.

The list of lectures for 1734 states that these were the ones that were planned, but we don't know how many of them were actually delivered. In the spring of 1734, Naples was invaded by a Spanish army and on May 10 Carlo of Bourbon made a triumphant entry into the city. One indication of the unsettled situation is that in November of that year Cirillo organized a celebratory volume for a marriage; the dedicatory letter is signed as from Naples, but the place of publication is listed as Padua.³⁵ In 1735, though, the *Oziosi* were back in business, and presented a series of lectures, they all con-

³⁴ Paolo Mattia Doria, *Ragionamento recitato nell'Accademia degli Oziosi* (Napoli: Angelo Vocola). For an example of the kind of work of Galiani's Academy, see Pietro Moliterno, *Praelectio ad caput xxii libri VII. Galeni De usu partium* (Napoli: Francesco Ricciardi, 1732). On the *Oziosi*, Giuseppe Pascale Cirillo, *Breve Ragguaglio dell'Accademia degli Oziosi istituita in Napoli nell'anno 1733* (Napoli: Angelo Vocola, 1734). This includes a list of lectures from 1733, and, the lectures planned for 1734. To this is added an *Indice delle materie intorno alle quali ragioneranno gli Accademici Oziosi nell'anno 1735* (Napoli: Felice Mosca).

³⁵ *Vari componimenti per le nozze D. Luigi Sanseverino e D. Cornelia Capece-Galeata* (Padova, 1734). A year before, *Vari componimenti . . . in lode D. Carlo Caraffa*, prepared in 1733 and published in 1734, included many of the same contributors and listed their affiliation and name in the *Oziosi*. It seemed that the new regime, at least for a while, downplayed organizations founded under Austrian auspices.

cerned Naples. Some dealt with Neapolitan history, other topics were its social and religious institutions, culture, geography and climate. It is perhaps significant that in 1735 Felice Mosca became the official printer of the *Oziosi*. Vocola remained the publisher for Doria; and Vocola became involved with an almost annual series of volumes of celebratory verses dedicated to the Virgin Mary which appeared from 1734 to the 1750s. In 1737 the *Oziosi* published another celebratory volume; if it included all the members, the organization was much reduced and its membership altered.³⁶

In 1735 Stefano di Stefano, Naples foremost authority on pastoralism, revived the academy of the *Investiganti*, but his death in 1736 ended this venture. His volume of July, 1735, celebrated the return of Carlo to Naples from Sicily and included poems by Doria, Vico, Gregorio Grimaldi and Giuseppe Aurelio di Gennaro, the poet of the XII Tables.³⁷ That same year the revived Neapolitan Arcadia using the press of Mosca published a volume honoring Carlo. But this was overshadowed, at least by the number of participants, by a major collection sponsored by the Arcadians in April to honor Giacomo Filippo Gatti who was to hold the theology chair at the University. The Arcadia had been revived in 1733 to celebrate the arrival of Giulio Visconti who turned out to be the last Austrian viceroy in Naples. In 1738 Mosca published two celebratory volumes for the marriage of their new king Carlo of Bourbon with Maria Amalia of Saxony. One volume was prepared by the University faculty, the second had a much more diverse authorship and was by the members of the reconstituted Neapolitan Arcadia. Its members included Vico, Giuseppa Barbapiccola, Cirillo, Gregorio Grimaldi and Gaetano Lombardo; also writing was Ignazio Mancini, the librettist for Pergolesi's *La conversione di S. Guglielmo Duca di Aquitania*. But Doria did not participate in these volumes celebrating Naples' new sovereign.

Doria gradually moved towards the periphery of Neapolitan intellectual life; this process had begun with his controversy with Spinelli. Francesco Maria Spinelli, the Prince of Scalea, had decided to answer Doria's attack on Descartes; in 1733 Mosca published his *Riflessioni*.³⁸

³⁶ *Vari componimenti . . . delle nozze del Antonio Capece Minutolo con Teresa Filingieri* (Spoleto: Giannini, 1737).

³⁷ Stefano di Stefano, *Componimenti per lo faustissima ritorna da Sicilia del Carlo Ré* (Parigi, 1735).

³⁸ Francesco Maria Spinelli, *Le riflessioni di F.M. Spinelli, Principe della Scalea, su le*

Spinelli, like Gravina and Metastasio, was a product of Caloprese's school. Vico valued his opinion and recounts at length in his *Autobiography* Spinelli's suggested corrections to the second edition of *Scienza nuova*.³⁹ In his *Discorsi*, Doria had argued that Descartes' philosophy was in fact a veiled presentation of Spinozism; Spinelli countered by arguing that Doria's version of Platonism was itself Spinozism. Doria responded in 1733 with a *Risposte* published by Vocola; the title continues with Spinelli's entire title. Doria followed this in 1734 by an anonymous *Lettera* written to a friend bearing the false place of publication of Lucca.⁴⁰ Doria's argument was, in essence, that Spinelli was not arguing against Doria but Spinoza, but that had been Spinelli's point, that Doria was a Spinozist. Clearly things had loosened up when scholars could accuse each other of atheism and not cause scandal among ecclesiastics or repercussions to themselves. Both authors talked past each other for they both proceed from different conceptions of what Spinoza or Spinozism meant.⁴¹ They agreed it was atheistic, but they disagreed on why God was denied. In a manuscript answer to Doria, Spinelli indicated that one of his real concerns was the Deist notion that a perfect morality was possible in any religion.⁴² Doria shared this concern about morality, but believed that the problem was that Europe's political leaders and philosophers had lost touch with metaphysics. Doria had concluded that metaphysics was derivative from or the equivalent of political theory.

principali materia della prima filosofia fatte all'occasione di esaminare la prima parte di un libro intitolato Discorsi critici e filosofici alla filosofia degli antichi e moderni di P.M. Doria (Napoli: Mosca, 1733).

³⁹ Spinelli wrote an autobiography in the form of a letter. Francesco Spinelli, "Vita e studi", Art. X in *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici*, (Venezia: Simone Occhi, 1753), p. 504. Spinelli's comments concerned errors of matter of fact; there is no suggestion that Spinelli perceived the work as containing anything against Descartes' philosophy.

⁴⁰ Paolo Mattia Doria, *Lettera di N. ad un suo amico* (Lucca, 1734), p. 19, discusses *i punti di Zenone*. Here Doria appeared to have returned to his old argument with Vico that had been part of the Porzio, *conatus* dispute.

⁴¹ This is an excellent example of the impulse of this time to turn one's opponent into an atheist. Neither Spinelli or Doria were atheists, they represented different groups in Naples' intellectual scene, and even Giannone from Vienna enjoyed watching them duke it out; Pietro Giannone, *Epistolario*, 1003–4, 1026. On a similar pattern in France see, Alan Charles Kors, "Theology and atheism in early modern France" in *The transmission of culture in early modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Grafton and Ann Blair (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 238–275. This theme is developed in more detail in his *Atheism in France*.

⁴² BNN MSS XV E 28, 7r. This manuscript is added to a printed copy of Spinelli's *Riflessioni*.

Political thinking was prior to and shaped philosophic abstractions.

In respect to these issues it is relevant to note a more moderate work on the problems posed by Spinoza written by Niccolo Capasso.⁴³ The "Institutions" referred to in his title are the sacraments practiced by the Catholic Church. As he understood his task what he first needed to defend was the integrity of Sacred Scripture itself. He starts by refuting the scriptural interpretations of La Peyrère, Hobbes and Spinoza. Besides attempting to answer their critique from within Scripture itself, he sought further justifications in the records and histories of the pagans. His next task was to prove the existence of God; for this he believed that Descartes' arguments provided the only convincing demonstration. Volume 2 begins with a refutation of what he considered to be Spinoza's denial of free will. In agreement with Valletta and Grimaldi, he believed that authentic faith came only from the heart and a simple piety. And, he believed that a defense of Catholic belief and sacraments had to start with an historical analysis of the Biblical text. Capasso, like Vico and Giannone, was attempting to find a method to understand religious experience in its historical context.

A sign of Doria's growing estrangement from Bourbon Naples was his work entitled *Il capitano filosofo* (The Philosopher-Captain) published by Angelo Vocola in 1739. While it continued in large measure the topics and views of *La vita civile*, there are some remarkable changes. *La vita civile* was addressed to an hereditary monarch, *Il capitano filosofo* concerned the role of a virtuous military leader. But Doria was not very clear as to what would stop such a leader from seizing political power and establishing a just regime. Doria had lost faith in monarchs as capable of initiating serious social reform. In 1741 he prepared a manuscript indicting the mercantile economics of Europe's rulers in a work entitled *Del commercio del regno di Napoli* (The Commerce of the Kingdom of Naples). That same year he drafted the *Idea di una perfetta repubblica*; this work apparently summarized all of his rage against the failures of monarchy, as well as the perfidy of the Jesuits and the Jansenists as well.⁴⁴ He condemned all

⁴³ Niccolo Capasso, *Institutiones theologicae dogmaticae* (Napoli: Serafino Porsile, 1754). This work was published 20 years after Capasso's death. On Capasso see Raffaele Ajello, *Arcana juris*, 147-155; his article "Capasso, Nicolo" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 18, 397-401.

⁴⁴ This kind of juxtaposition of a work on practical politics conjoined with a

monarchies, with the exception of the Chinese, as tyrannical. Along with this he probably repeated his rejection of the other modern tyrannies of algebra, and the philosophies of Locke, Descartes, Spinoza and Newton. Doria refrained from printing this work.

In 1745 Vocola published his *Narrazione di un libro inedito* (The story of an unpublished book) which was his last will and testament concerning his writings. In this work he explained that he was placing on deposit twelve manuscript volumes at the library of San Angelo al Nido. These were his unpublished works, some dating from early in the century, which he would leave for anyone interested. A rumor spread that he had intended to publish them all, but he no longer had the cash to fund such a project. His action was unusual and indicated that in his mind there was still a kind of symbiotic relation between educated general readers, the printed book, and the manuscript in Naples. And he expected that his ideas would be vindicated. In a certain sense they have been for in 1981–82 these manuscripts were published in a modern edition.

In his will Doria left a sum of money to pay for the printing of his *Idea di una perfetta repubblica*. In 1753 Angelo Vocola was given the job; for whatever reason Vocola did not obtain either a secular or sacred approval. In the middle of the night Vocola was suddenly arrested—in Bourbon times there was more sensitivity about public humiliation than what had obtained at the end of the seventeenth century when this was done in broad daylight. Word had leaked out about the content of the work and all copies including the manuscript were impounded. On March 13 one of the more bizarre scenes of mid-century Naples took place when the City's hangman publicly burned the manuscript and all the printed sheets. Vocola, on account of his age, was released from prison. A very good idea of the contents of the work can be gathered from a letter prepared on February 28 of that year which identified the offensive passages in this work that justified burning the work.⁴⁵

The execution of Doria's book might give the impression of a return to the late 1680s, but times had definitely changed. Carlo, in 1746,

more theoretical one was typical of Doria's thinking. A similar pairing occurred with *La vita civile* and the *Massime del governo spagnolo a Napoli*.

⁴⁵ Paola Zambelli, "Il rogo postumo di Paolo Mattia Doria", in *Ricerche sulla cultura dell'Italia moderna* (Bari: Laterza, 1973); Mario Agrimi, "Le polemiche antigesuitiche di P.M. Doria" in *Paolo Mattia Doria fra rinnovamento e tradizione* (Galatina (Lecce): Congedo, 1985), 23–91.

had abolished the Inquisition. In 1740 Jews were permitted to reside in the Kingdom and not suffer discrimination. In 1741 the long awaited census (there hadn't been one since 1669) was finally begun; this could be the basis of a rational reform of the taxation system. As a political nation a new Naples was being created. But Giannone, Grimaldi, Vico and Doria did not succeed in reaching their intended audience or in having the effect they desired in this new world. A number of factors complicated their situation, besides the obvious one of Giannone's imprisonment. The newly gained independence of the Kingdom of Naples gave a renewed prominence to southern Italy, but it also meant that Vienna no longer had an interest in promoting Naples' scholars. And, contacts with the English interests that had been so important at the end of the 1720s lessened during the early years of the Bourbon regime. At about the same time, the only journals reviewing Italian publications folded as in the case of the Genevan *Bibliothèque italique*, or, gradually ceased regular publication, as in the case of the *Acta Eruditorum*. Naples retained its status as a musical center, but that reputation had no dependance on the publishing of works. After the mid-century Neapolitan scholars had reestablished older links with the Iberian peninsula and its international empire. Antonio Genovesi provides an excellent example of a successful career; he shifted from being a specialist in metaphysical theology in the 1740s to a theorist of the methods of achieving economic development in the 1760s.

Conclusion

Having said all this, we can return to where I started and review the claim that Vico's Naples had a significant part to play in the development of his theories about the study of culture. This is also an appropriate juncture to remark briefly about what the intellectual activity of Naples, and my emphasis on cultural production, adds to contemporary conceptions of the early Enlightenment. I have emphasized that the particular character of Vico's science and his thought were developed in an environment full of hindrances to radical ideas. The internalization of these constraints was part of his character and the consequences proved quite productive for him. The evidence is that this acceptance had no moderating influence on the fiery passion of his commitment to seek the truth or his desire to express his

conclusions in a vigorous and luminous prose. At times the aim of his writing seems to be to button-hole the reader in order to harrangue by repetition. He delighted in retailing his genius. Despite his inability, at times, to complete an argument, and his apparent disinterest in contemporary research, he had an honest admiration for genuine learning and scholarship. The editions of *Scienza nuova* proclaim the individuality of the author; at the same time, in his Autobiography he enthusiastically affirms his pride in living in Catholic Naples.

The patronage networks and the regulation of book publication in Naples shaped Vico's thinking and scholarly values profoundly. The musical and artistic communities, it seems to me, had their effects on his mature work. The scholarly investigations of Gravina pointed to the path Vico was to take. Even Vico's antiquarian friends were, at one level, not far removed from his method in their ambition to understand and summarize the values of a past epoch based on major architectural monuments, fundamental documents, and inscriptions. The students of inscriptions were confident of their imaginative ability to restore scarcely legible letters and fragments of words to their original meaning. Eighteenth century scholars took seriously their contemporaries who claimed not only to read the Etruscan language, but to be arguing over the fine points of its grammar. They were much less impressed by Vico's rereading of ancient evidence and it is easy to see why. The Etruscologists asked acceptance for an analysis based on evidence that no one understood, while Vico wished his readers to doubt everything they had read about archaic Greece and Rome based on his idiosyncratic interpretation of evidence. It was much easier for this culture to doubt the evidence of sense perception than to deny what it had memorized in its primary and secondary school education. One of the few gains of the contemporary decline of the general knowledge and interest in Greek and Roman literature and history in our academic training is that most of us have an easier time perceiving Vico's general point than did eighteenth century readers.

My description has focused on intellectual production at Naples, and I made reference to European developments as well. Such an investigation does not solve or make easier the genuine difficulties in making out Vico's argument. This study has focused on Vico and Vico's reading; and I believe I have identified several debates that make the understanding of some of his arguments easier. But such a description cannot squeelch the friendly mockers who pass on the

view that at bottom Vico was a second-rate mind—whatever that means. Vico's accomplishments were real enough and significant. Part of the problem with understanding Vico has been that, like Leibniz, he was a great compromiser in an era that by the mid-eighteenth century despised compromise. Vico sought to reconcile philosophy and philology, Stoicism and the Epicureans (or Pythagoras the atomist with Parmenides), the principle of natural right with historical development, myth with science, and the list could be continued.

Eighteenth century intellectuals as a rule were not sympathetic to other peoples myths or their mythmaking. Vico's claim to be making a science of history didn't challenge or inspire them. For generations, jurists, students of Roman law had been talking about the scientific character of their research. Given their own use of the term, an historical science meant the paleographical methods of Mabillon had applied to the primary source evidence found in documents, inscriptions and coins. Contemporary readers of Vico, while a lot more exacting in their expectations of historical evidence, were not especially sophisticated as to what constitutes culture, myth and mythopoetic thinking. They were less apt than we to be enchanted by such heady stimulation. As I have suggested Vico's approach was not completely foreign to certain lines of investigation pursued in Northern Europe, but for a variety of reasons Vico's work had very limited influence. Montesquieu is a case in point. He was told enough about Vico to buy his book, but not enough to actually study it.

If the essential contribution of eighteenth century thinking was to secularize conceptions of thought, belief, and action, this account of Naples corroborates that. This Naples fits the description of the early Enlightenment given by Hazard as a Renaissance without a Rabelais, and, with minor provisos, that made by Peter Gay as a renewal of pagan classicism with the addition of modern science. What the Neapolitan scene contributes to this general picture are the ways in which such a transformation could be accomplished but preserve a respect for the religious experience itself. Naples, to be sure looked to Paris, Amsterdam, and especially London during the years of Austrian rule for its scientific models. Publication of Italian science at the end of the seventeenth century, the works of Redi, the experiments of the *Cimento*, and Neapolitan scientists were replaced at the end of the 1720s by the *Transactions of the Royal Society* and works by the Boyle lecturers. The historical writings of Vico and Giannone responded to these methods and approaches. Although on the

periphery of French culture Naples produced a critique of its national history more radical than anything that appeared in Paris, and created a universal history that was genuinely philosophical.

The early Enlightenment was not simply a French affair, nor were responses to it limited to pale imitations of the French experience. The mechanics and industry of book publication in itself made that impossible. Intellectual centers simply couldn't produce and distribute the amount of materials needed to supply more remote areas. The methods of book history when applied to this time period can help give concrete evidence about the transmission of ideas in Europe. And, they help us to see how early methods of peer review helped and hindered the production of knowledge. I have argued that certain crucial aspects of Vico's thought can be related to the local history of Neapolitan printing. Useful insights into his work and that of his contemporaries and their interchanges with readers gain different meanings and possibilities depending on their distribution in print or in manuscript. Furthermore, I have argued that the business of this intellectual community can be more clearly seen in its patronage and approval letters than in its quarrels. A manuscript controversy was a matter of deadly earnest; but print did not necessarily break the bonds of friendship and shared research. Doria, for example, endorsed a work of Porzio while he was engaged in the refutation of another. Giannestasio and Benedetti did not work together after the circulation of the *Giannestasio*. Most of this kind of learned exchange had to be local knowledge.

Doria, at the end of his life, believed that fruitful interaction was still possible between manuscript and books and an author and readers. Vico, on this issue took the more radical view. Vico believed that literacy, the striving for letters arose from conflict; it was a struggle for power in the ancient city. Solon's statement of "Know thyself" indicated that all men were equally competent to make laws; legislation was not a prerogative of the nobles alone. In heroic times all men were poets, all were law makers, it is in the Age of Men that the distinction of author and reader becomes fundamental, and the female author a possibility. But with the *ricorso* and the return of barbarism all men will once again become authors. As with all of Vico's major insights this one corrolates with a moment in his Autobiography. Vico concluded his Autobiography by describing his delight in being a writer and engaging in intellectual combat. And, not surprisingly, this is done in a veiled reference to Lucretius. Vico

described his pleasure in climbing to his desk to answer his detractors. The desk is like the cave of the cyclops and from this citadel Vico seeks vengeance on all who trespass on his territory. He has transformed Lucretius' image of the Epicurean sage who retires to a lofty crag to survey and pity the petty concerns of mankind to that of the violent and fierce solitary who pours forth his noble anger in prose.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Giambattista Vico, *Opere filosofiche*, Autobiography, p. 54. The Lucretius allusion is to *De rerum natura*, 2, 1-19.

INDEX OF MANUSCRIPTS

BSNSP (Biblioteca della Società Napoletana di Storia Patria)

XXI A 7, 169

XXIII D 6, 35, 52

XXXI B 3, 115, 136, 137

BNN (Naples. Biblioteca Nazionale)

I D 4, 55

I D 29, 45

III A 44, 280

IX A 66, 55

XI C 1, 36, 38, 39

XI C 10, 40

XI C 67, 36

XI E 15, 36

XIII B 30, 301, 302

XIII B 69–73, 80, 93, 98, 101, 103–105

XIII C 91, 260

XIII D 114, 66, 68, 70

XIII D 115, 66

XIII H 59, 302

XIV H 43, 115

XV B 1, 36

XV B 2, 39

XV B 3, 38

XV B 4, 40

XV B 6, 52

XV E 23, 152

XV E 28, 310

XV F 12, 136

XV F 53, 149

B Branc

V C 18, 213

BNO (Naples. Biblioteca dei Oratoriani)

XXVIII 4 1, 55

ASV (Archivio di Stato di Venezia)

Dispacci degli ambasciatori al Senato

Filza 120, 213

BMV (Venice. Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana)

It VI 112 (5888), 137

It VI 307 (6194), 145

Misc 2168, 124

INDEX OF PRIMARY MATERIAL

- Acampora, Giovan Lorenzo, 39, 123, 145, 159
Acta Eruditorum, 7, 27, 43, 83, 95, 169, 199, 262, 269, 270, 273–276, 313
 Acunto, Paolo d', 30
 Addison, Joseph, 96
 Agnellus da Ravenna, 158, 284–286
 Alciato, Gerolamo, 2
 Aldimari, Biagio, 6, 128
 Alessandro, Giuseppe D', 208
 Alfano, Tomasso Maria, 208, 265
 Alipio, Sebastiano, 259
 Althann, Michele, Cardinal, 213, 215, 217, 279
 Altieri, Sebastiano, 91
 Anastasio, Filippo, 99
 Andreini, Isabella, 92
 Andreini, Pietro Andrea, 3
 Aniello di Napoli, 13, 16, 30, 72
 Anzani, Angelo, 150
 Aquino, Tomasso d', 44, 105, 144, 145
 Aragona, Tullia d', 92
 Araia, Francesco, 232
 Argento, Gaetano, 126, 147, 149, 151
 Ariani, Augustino, 97, 184
 Arnauld, Antoine, 270
 Astori, Giannantonio, 162
 Astorini, Elia, 124, 125
 Aulisio, Domenico, 61, 95, 108, 109, 123, 126, 198, 199, 259
 Aureli, Aurelio, 77
 Aurelio di Gennaro, Giuseppe, 205, 309
 Avitabile, Biagio Majoli d', 125, 136, 160–163, 208
Avvisi di Napoli, 135, 137, 210, 212
 Bacchini, Benedetto, 158, 159, 284–286
 Baillet, Adrien, 214, 219
 Barba (printer), 46
 Barbapiccola, Giuseppe Eleonora, 214, 271, 309
 Barbeyrac, Jean, 171
 Barone, Domenico, 307
 Battiferri, Laura, 92
 Baudemont, Remi, 192
 Bayle, Pierre, 7, 27, 61, 152, 248
 Belli, Filippo, 42–44
 Belli, Pietro, 276
 Beltrano, Ottavio, 225
 Belvedere Andrea, 118
 Benavides, Francesco, Conte, Duke of San Estevan (Santisteban), 31, 34, 48, 83
 Benincasa, Rutilio, 225
 Benzi, Francesco (printer), 11
 Benedetti, Giovanni Battista, 17–19, 46–51, 57, 66, 69, 71, 83, 94, 161, 185, 189, 276
 Benedict XIII (Vincenzo Maria Orsini, Cardinal of Benevento), 10, 11, 44
 Berkeley, George, 220, 221
 Bernardo Maria da Napoli, 72
 Bianchini, Francesco, 188, 245, 258
 Bibiena, Ferdinando Galli, 88
Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne, 82, 169, 202
Bibliothèque italique, 273, 313
 Bijnkershoek, Cornelis van, 261
 Biscardi, Serafino, 37, 38, 44, 61, 94, 95, 115, 122, 144, 200
 Blasio, Agnello Alessio de, 84
 Bonavia, Maddalena, 112, 114
 Bonis, Novellis de (printer), 11
 Borelli, Giovanni Alfonso, 25, 194, 267
 Borghini, Maria Selvaggia, 92
 Bortoni, Giovanni, 148
 Bottari, Giovanni, 218
 Bousquet, Marc Michel (printer), 295
 Boyle, Robert, 19, 63
 Brown, John, 234, 235
 Bulgarelli, Marianna, 231
 Bulifon, Antonio, 9, 16, 42, 65, 92, 95, 123, 135, 136
 Bulifon, Niccolo, 35, 137
 Buonocore, Francesco, 267
 Burnet, Gilbert, 1–7, 27
 Burnet, Thomas, 60
 Burney, Charles, 230, 235, 305
 Calogerà, Angelo, 277, 278
 Caloprese, Gregorio, 94, 101–103, 136, 146, 200
 Campailla, Tommaso, 221–223

- Capasso, Giambattista, 291
 Capasso, Niccolo, 103, 104, 106, 146, 150, 212, 251, 259, 261, 274, 311
 Capecelatro, Francesco, 216
 Carafa, Antonio, 84
 Carafa-Pacecco, Carlo, 131, 209
 Caravita, Domenico, 209
 Caravita, Nicolo, 35, 38, 39, 44, 51, 61, 83, 84, 91, 96, 115, 126, 144-146, 151, 201
 Carlo II (Charles II of Spain, Hapsburg), 48, 110, 111
 Carlo III (Charles VI, Emperor of Austria, Hapsburg), 115
 Carlo III (Charles III, King of Naples, Bourbon), 266, 294, 299, 300, 308
 Carselini, Fabio, 198
 Cartari, Vincenzo, 258
 Casalicchio, Carlo, 28
 Castagnola, Giovanni Antonio, 122, 123
 Castaldi, Salvatore (printer), 18, 19
 Castelli, Angela Elisibetta, 213
 Celano, Carlo, 3
 Celle, Giovanni Battista (printer), 128
 Cellini, Benvenuto, 276, 277
 Cheyne, George, 280, 281
 Chiesa, Giannicola, 94
 Christina, Queen, 77, 89, 90, 141, 267
 Churchill, Awnshame (printer), 73, 80
 Ciaffoni, Bernardino, 161, 162
 Ciccarelli, Lorenzo, 16, 17, 127, 214, 223
 Cicatelli, Emmanuele, 44
 Cirillo, Giuseppe Pascale, 307-309
 Cirillo, Niccolo, 259, 262, 273, 276
 Clarke, Samuel, 214
 Clement XI, Pope (Giovan Francesco Albani), 58, 126, 133, 142, 143, 152
 Clement XII, Pope (Lorenzo Corsini), 238, 239, 265
 Colberg, Ehregott, 60
 Colonna, Vittoria, 92
 Colomba, Giacomo, 121
 Confuorto, Domenico, 2, 11, 12, 21, 31, 51, 52, 77, 88, 89, 95, 96
La congiura avvenuta in Napoli, 116
 Constanzius (Constanzio), Frater, 115, 136, 137
 Conti, Antonio, 243, 277
 Conti, Natale, 258
 Convo, Giulio, 113
 Cornelio, Tommaso, 14, 15, 25, 29, 44, 46, 51, 55, 100, 118, 130
 Corsini, Lorenzo, see Clement XII
 Costanza, Angelo da, 208
 Cousin, Louis, 100
 Cristofaro, Giacinto de, 16, 29-31, 42, 44, 123, 126, 136, 184, 208, 259
 Crocchi, Pietro, 235
 Cujas, Jacques, 209
 D'Alessandro, Giuseppe, 208
 D'Andrea, Francesco, 2, 13-15, 44, 54-56, 105, 126, 147, 222
 D'Andrea, Gennaro, 115, 126
 Daniel, Gabriel, 47
 Danio, Amato, 36, 37, 44, 77, 80, 82, 94, 122, 144
 Daun, Wierich von, Count, 133, 143
 De Gennaro, Antonio Maria (engraver), 175
 De Grado, Bartolomeo (Engraver), 175
 De Grado, Francesco (engraver), 175
 De Julianis, Caterina, 241
 De Louvemont (Engraver), 21
 De Magistris, Giovanni, 42
 De Martino, Nicola Antonio, 271
 De Martino, Pietro, 272
 De Matteis, Paolo, 118, 175-177, 209
 Dereham, Thomas, 279
 Derham, William, 278, 279, 281
 Descartes, Rene, and Cartesianism, xx, 15, 19, 29, 40, 44, 49-51, 53, 56, 62, 67-70, 102, 103, 167, 188, 189, 214, 215, 219, 220, 223, 271
 Di Capoa, Leonardo, 13-15, 25, 28, 44, 51, 61, 95, 118, 126, 130
 Di Fiore, Domenico Antonio, 307
 Dilly, Antoine, 58, 127
 Dominici, Bernardo de, xxii, xxiii, 22, 23, 118, 120, 121, 153, 178, 241, 259, 292, 293
 Donzelli, Giuseppe, 118
 Donzelli, Tommaso, 13, 15, 64, 118
 Doria, Paolo Mattia, 41, 44, 92, 97, 123, 146, 160, 168-173, 175, 184, 190-195, 214, 218, 219, 258, 289-291, 307
 Duck, Arthur, 209
 DuHamel, Jean Baptiste, 46
 Durante, Francesco, 283
 Egizio, Matteo, 54, 80, 82, 95, 108, 123, 175, 250, 258-261
 Elbeuf, Prince, Emmanuel Mauritz, 160, 161
 Enriquez, Enrico, 259
 Etmüller, Michael, 273

- Falcone, Nicolo Carminio, 28, 273
 Fardella, Michelangelo, 220
 Farinelli (Carlo Broschi), 233, 236
 Fasulo, Geronimo (printer), 16, 52
 Fauchet, Claude, 224
 Feind, Barthold, 135
 Fénelon, François de, 169, 215
 Feo, Francesco, 232
 Finetti, Giovanni Francesco, 243
 Fonseca Pimentel, Eleonora, 144
 Francolino, 162
 Francone, Paolo, 214
 Frik, Joannis (printer), 117

 Gabrielli, Domenico, 78
 Gaetano, Cecilia, 136
 Galassi (printer), 9
 Galenis, Nicodemo de, 161
 Galeota, Antonio, 192
 Galiani, Celestino, 307
 Galiani, Ferdinando, 10, 86
 Galileo and the Galilean tradition, 15,
 54, 56, 59, 85, 100, 130, 131, 148,
 163, 167, 184, 242–244, 278, 291
 Galizia, Nicola, 30, 91, 106, 184
Galleria di Minerva, 44, 83
 Gambara, Veronica, 92
 Garofalo, Biagio, 126, 198
 Gassendi, Pierre, 15, 29, 40, 55,
 60, 63
 Gemelli Careri, Giovanni Francesco,
 77–83, 96
 Genovesi, Antonio, xxi, 41
 Germain, Michel, 2, 7
 Gessari, Bernardino (printer), 204,
 205, 215, 267–273, 276, 280,
 283, 291
 Giannelli, Basilio, 16, 29, 30, 42–45,
 91, 122, 123, 136
 Giannettasio, Nicolo Partenio, 17, 18,
 20, 21, 45, 61–63, 94, 126, 148,
 165, 208, 209
Giannastasio, 61–63, 108, 165, 187
 Giannone, Pietro, xxii, 33, 40, 130,
 145, 168, 169, 209–213, 242, 258,
 263, 265, 274, 287–289, 293–299
 Giberti, Giuseppe Nicola, Bishop,
 28–31, 34, 35
 Gimma, Giacinto, 124–126, 223–225
 Giordano, Luca, 118–121
 Giorgio, Matteo, 220
Giornale dei Letterati, 83, 127, 128, 131,
 157–164, 166–168, 181, 182, 184,
 186, 187, 192, 193, 198, 208, 223

 Giralaldi, Gregorio, 258
 Gisolfo, Pietro, 28
 Gonzalez, Tirso, 48, 52, 161
 Gramignani, Antonio (printer), 11
 Gravina, Gian Vincenzo, 90, 126,
 150, 151, 200–203, 231, 236,
 258, 259, 314
 Grazini, Giacomo, 128–130
 Grimaldi, Bartolomeo Ceva, 54, 116
 Grimaldi, Costatino, 51, 52, 64–71,
 94, 126, 146, 149, 151, 152, 165,
 199, 215–218, 251, 263, 299, 300
 Grimaldi, Gregorio, 299, 309
 Grimani, Vincenzo, Cardinal, 113,
 139, 140, 142–146, 151–154,
 167, 168
 Grotius, Hugo, 39, 103, 104, 244,
 248, 274
 Guglielmini, Giovanni Domenico,
 43, 96
 Guyot de Merville, Michel, 228

 Handel, George Friedrich, 139–143,
 232
 Hasse, Johann Adolph, 232, 283
 Heinsius, Daniel, 182, 183
 Hobbes, Thomas, 28, 39, 60, 102,
 104, 106, 253, 311
 Huet, Pierre-Daniel, 47

 Innocent XII, Pope (Antonio
 Pignatelli), 30, 40, 58, 111
 Intieri, Bartolomeo, 95

 Joseph I, Emperor of Austria, 133,
 134, 139, 151
Journal de Trévoux, 164

 Keiser, Reinhard, 135
 Kircher, Athanasius, 197

 Laudati, Benedetto, 138
 La Peyrère, Isaac de, 70, 128, 260,
 300, 301, 311
 LeClerc, Jean, 60, 197, 239
 Leibniz, G.W.F., 8, 24, 43, 47, 48,
 53, 194, 303
 Leo, Leonardo, 232, 283, 305
 Leopold I (Emperor of Austria), 133,
 139
 Lipsius, Justus, 248
 Locke, John, 24, 290, 291
 Lombardo, Gaetano, 58, 127, 136,
 259

- Lucina, Giuseppe, 84, 95, 96, 107, 108, 136, 187
 Lucretius, 15, 30, 102, 107, 252, 253, 317
 Mabillon, Jean, 1–8, 44, 58, 70, 129
 Macchia Conspiracy, 65, 113–115
 Macciucca, Michele Vargas, 263
 Maffei, Scipione, 158, 262, 297, 299
 Magliabecchi, Antonio, 3, 9, 14, 16, 44, 65, 127, 128, 157
 Magliar (engraver), 82
 Majello, Carlo, 117, 146, 148, 149, 151
 Malebranche, Nicholas, 24, 27, 63
 Malpighi, Marcello, 254, 278
 Mancini, Ignazio, 309
 Manuzzi, Francesco Paolo, 28–30, 33
 Marchese, Annibale, 283
 Marchetti, Alessandro, 56, 95, 222
 Marchini, Marta, 92
 Marinella, Lucrezia, 92
 Martello, Pier (printer), 149
 Martorelli, Giacomo, 263, 265, 273
 Masienello and his Revolution, 3, 20, 31, 32, 115, 135, 206, 257, 306
 Mauro, Tommaso de, 112
 Maurodinoia, Domenico, 124
 Mazzocchi, Alessio Simmaco, 250, 258, 261–264
 Medina Coeli, Duke of (de la Cerda, Luigi, Marchese di Cogolludo), 48, 80, 82, 88–91, 93, 112, 114–116, 134
Mémoires de Trévoux, 20, 239
Memoirs of Literature, 156, 160
 Merolla, Girolamo, 72–76
 Metastasio, Pietro, 102, 205, 230, 231, 233, 259
 Milo, Domenico Andrea de, 11
Miscellanea di varie operette, 108
 Misson, François, 10
 Molinos, 7, 8
 Moliterno, Pietro, 308
 Mollo, Francesco (printer), 72, 74
 Monforte, Antonio, 94
 Montesquieu, Charles de, 169, 210, 241
 Montfauçon, Bernard de, 95
 Mora, Isabella della, 92
 More, John, 226
 Morhof, Daniel, 60
 Mosca, Felice (printer), 123, 166, 190, 200, 201, 204, 223, 260, 261, 278, 280, 282, 283, 291, 308–310
 Muratori, Ludovico Antonio, 126, 156, 157–159, 265, 273, 285, 295, 297
 Musi, Maria Maddalena, 111
 Musitano, Carlo, 64
 Muzio, Gennaro and Vincenzo (printer) 120, 193, 208, 210, 283
 Nardelli, Giovanni, 119
 Naso, Niccolo (printer), 212, 213
 Newton, Isaac and Newtonianism, 53, 194, 278, 280
 Noia, Francesco, 128
 Ogilvie, James, 210
 Oliva, Francesco, 207, 241
 Orsini, Vincenzo Maria, see Benedict XIII, Pope
 Pace, Onofrio (printer), 208
 Paciaudi, Paolo Maria, 108, 109
 Pagano, Francesco, 147
 Palazzuolo, Antonio Maria da, 215
 Palma, Giovanni Battista, 16
 Pansuti, Saverio, 114, 146
 Paolo, Sebastiano, 260
 Pappacoda, Federigo, 91, 96, 123
 Paragallo, Gaspare, 16
 Pardies, Ignace-Gaston, 127
 Parrino, Domenico Antonio (printer), 9, 10, 12, 16, 82, 120, 123, 137, 138, 154, 200, 201, 204, 217, 264
 Pellegrini, Matteo, 237
 Perez, Francesco 130
 Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista, 305–307
 Perrucci, Andrea, 124
 Petris, Carlo de, 112
 Philip V (King of Spain, Bourbon), 37, 44, 112, 113, 116–118, 122, 123, 125, 126, 134, 171, 267
 Piccardo, Angelo, 72
 Pico, Fulvia, 74
 Pignatelli, Antonio, Bishop, see Innocent XII
 Pignatelli, Francesco, 217
 Pinelli, Lorenzo, 217
 Piovene, Agostino, 134
 Pitcarin, Archibald, 283
 Poeta, Gioacchino, 136

- Poetry Collections. Arcadian verse, 90, 126, 136, 200. Honorific and funeral poetry, 83, 84, 91, 123, 239, 309. Marriage poetry, 136, 237, 238, 259, 308, 309
- Porcia, Gian Artico de, 277
- Porfile, Carlo (printer), 11
- Porpora, Carlo (printer), 42
- Porpora, Nicola, 232
- Porsile, Giuseppe, 232
- Porsile, Serafino (printer), 311
- Porzio, Lucantonio, 17, 25, 42, 94, 127, 190, 192-194, 259, 271
- Prisco, Giuseppe, 273
- Pufendorf, Samuel, 24, 102, 169, 244, 248, 275
- Queirolo, Francesco, 268, 269
- Rabbegno, Raffaele, 198
- Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filosofici*, 93, 163, 165, 277, 278, 310
- Raillard, Domenico, 20
- Raillard, Giacomo (printer), 13-20, 30, 32, 44, 46, 62, 84, 94, 95, 136
- Raillard, Barnardo-Michele (printer), 16, 241
- Redi, Francesco, 13, 44, 46
- Regius (Henri du Roy), 271
- Ricchi, Antonio, 208
- Riccardi, Alessandro, 146-149, 151
- Ricciardi, Francesco (printer), 210, 215, 225-227, 282, 308
- Ripa, Cesare, 258
- Ripa, Matteo, 289, 290
- Rocca, Domenico, 91
- Rohault, Jacques, 214
- Rojas, Bernardo de, 46, 185
- Romano, Damiano, 247, 298
- Roselli, Domenico (printer), 260
- Roselli, Giuseppe (printer), 65, 82-84, 91
- Rosito, Carlo, 42
- Rossi, Gennaro, 273
- Rossi, Giuseppe, 307
- Rossi, Nicolo Maria, 259
- Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 305, 306
- Salvi, Vincenzo, 122
- Sandulli, Paolino, 130
- Sanfelice, Ferdinando, 138, 147
- Sangro, Antonio di, 136
- Sangro, Lucio di, 165
- San Severino, Aurora, 136, 177, 209
- Sarconio, Giovanni, 162
- Scarfò, Giangrisostomo, 163-165
- Scarlatti, Alessandro, 63, 88-90, 112, 117, 120, 154, 155, 232, 233, 235
- Scarlatti, Domenico, 112, 113
- Scarlatti, Giuseppe, 113
- Schisano, Carlo, 229
- Selden, John, 244, 248, 274, 275
- Sergio, Giannantonio, 205
- Sersale, Niccolo, 93, 96, 101, 114
- Shaftesbury, Anthony Cooper, Third Earl of, 174-177, 209
- Sigillo, Pietro, 11
- Smith, Thomas, 40
- Solimena, Francesco, 20-23, 82, 118, 123, 124, 153, 154, 175, 283, 292, 293
- Solombrino, Filippo, 241
- Spagnuolo, Agnello, 136
- Spinelli, Carlo Francesco, 47
- Spinelli, Francesco, 102, 215, 309, 310
- Sportelli, Gennaro, 11
- Spinoza, Benedict, and Spinozism, 5, 27, 28, 51, 60, 102, 104, 128, 130, 198, 199, 220, 260, 302-304, 310, 311
- Stampiglia, Silvio, 63, 64, 121
- Stanley, Thomas, 60
- Stefano di Stefano, 123, 124, 309
- Sterlich, Francesco, 29
- Tafari, Giovanni Bernardino, 93, 264
- Tanucci, Bernardo, 299
- Tartarotti, Girolamo, 58, 299
- Taylor, Randall (printer), 10
- Terracciano, Xaviero, 119
- Terracina, Laura, 92
- Thomasius, Jakob, 60
- Thompson, Charles, 137, 138
- Toland, John, 24, 280, 297
- Toppi, Nicolo, 57
- Torno, Giulio, 243, 274, 293
- Torre, G.M. della, 165
- Torres, Antonio de, 289
- Totis, Giuseppe Domenici de, 77
- Tournes, Samuel de (printer), 64, 65
- Tozzi, Luca, 118
- Tremigliozi, Gaetano, 124
- Troise, Biagio, 199
- Troise, Carlo (printer), 125
- Vaccaro, Domenico Antonio, 121, 122, 138

- Vaccaro, Lorenzo, 121, 122
 Valiero (printer), 122
 Vallemont, Pierre, 223
 Valletta, Giuseppe, 2, 3, 4, 8, 14, 20, 39-41, 44, 51, 57-62, 91, 95, 96, 99, 126, 175, 208, 209, 215, 220, 262, 263, 270
 Vallisnieri, Antonio, 158, 159, 278
 Varillas, Antoine, 6
 Verenius, Bernard, 214
 Verheyn, Philippus, 271, 280
 Vernet, Jacques, 210, 295
 Vico, Giambattista, xiii, xv, xix, xx, 41, 96, 97, 313-317. Early prose and poetry, 83, 84, 117, 138, 216. *De nostri studi*, 160, 166-168, 186. *De Antiquissima*, 59, 165-167, 184-92, 194, 195, 263, 300. *Il diritto universale*, 59, 105, 205, 206, 242, 247. Other Prose and poetry, xvi, 192, 204, 205, 216, 237-239, 259, 269, 273-276. Autobiography, 178, 190, 206, 239. *Scienza nuova* 1725, 33, 105, 224, 231, 240-258, 286, 287. *Scienza nuova* 1730, 53, 105, 188, 207, 222, 224, 226, 227, 231, 234, 237, 255, 280-286, 291. *Scienza nuova* 1744, 53, 59, 105, 168, 188, 207, 222, 224, 255, 291, 300-304
 Vidania, Vincenzo, 205
 Vinci, Leonardo, 230-235, 283, 305
 Visconti, Biagio, 162
 Vitry, Edouard de, 239
 Vocola, Angelo (printer), 54, 308-312
 Von Helmont, Franciscus, 62
 Willis, Thomas, 127
 Windler, P.J., 165
 Wright, Edward, 2
 Zambecari, Francesco Maria, 233
 Zeno, Apostolo, 118, 126, 158

INDEX OF MODERN SOURCES

- Åkerman, Susanna, 141
 Adelman, Howard, 96
 Agrimi, Mario, 312
 Ajello, Raffaele, 6, 144, 168, 169,
 193, 203, 211, 216, 223, 311
 Amabile, Luigi, 29
 Angelini, Franca, 307
 Ascarelli, Roberta, 307

 Badaloni, Nicola, 15, 16, 47, 108,
 162, 202
 Bagioli, Mario, 87
 Bakhtin, Mikhail, 112
 Baldini, Ugo, 54, 269, 273
 Barthes, Roland, 231
 Becker, Howard, xvii
 Bedani, Gino, 181, 242, 246
 Benzoni, Gino, 85, 93
 Berlin, Isaiah, xviii, xix, 181, 209
 Bernal, Martin, 263
 Bernstein, John A., 174
 Bertelli, Sergio, 209, 212, 295–297
 Bianchi, Lino, 77
 Bloch, Marc, 224
 Blunt, Anthony, 122, 138
 Bobbio, Norberto, 206
 Bologna, Ferdinando, 21, 22, 175,
 293
 Bono, Salvatore, 72
 Borghero, Carlo, 223, 249
 Borelli, Gennaro, 241
 Borrelli, Antonio, 14
 Bottin, Francesco, 57
 Boureau, Alain, 28, 194, 195
 Boxer, C.R., 75
 Boyd, Malcolm, 90
 Braidà, Lodovica, 296
 Braudel, Ferdinand, 110
 Brizzi, Gian Paolo, 17
 Brook, Barry S., 306
 Byrne, Peter, 289

 Cajani, Luigi, 2
 Calabria, Antonio, 110
 Cammisa, Francesca, 152
 Campbell, Ted A., 7
 Canosa, Romano, 6, 29

 Caristia, Carmelo, 211
 Carpanetto, Dino, 98
 Casella, Anna, 143
 Cassani, Cinzia, 36
 Celletti, Rudolfo, 231, 234
 Chartier, Roger, xv
 Churchill, Winston, 132
 Cipriani, Giovanni, 185
 Cochrane, Erich, 157
 Colapietra, Raffaele, 2
 Colton, Judith, 120, 121
 Comparato, Vittor Ivo, 2, 15, 55,
 64, 128
 Conti, Vittorio, 171, 193
 Cortese, Nino, 136
 Costa, Gustavo, 130, 214
 Cotugno, Raffaele, 102
 Couliano, Ioan, 236
 Crispini, Francesco, 15
 Cristofolini, Paolo, xv, 221
 Croce, Benedetto, xiii, xvii, xviii, 88,
 91, 117, 268

 De Caro, Gaspare, 92, 137
 De Ferrari, Augusto, 17, 44
 De Giovanni, Biagio, 2, 193, 196
 De Maio, Romeo, 6, 264, 292
 De Michaelis, Cesare, 277
 Demus, Otto, 78
 Dent, Edward J., 112
 De Rosa, Gabriele, 28, 150
 De Rosa, Luigi, 32
 Dini, Alessandro, 193
 Donati, Claudio, 6
 Donzelli, Maria, 97
 Dooley, Brendan, 157

 Earle, William, 70

 Faldi, Carla Guglielmini, 118
 Fatica, Michele, 289
 Ferrone, Vincenzo, 130, 173, 193,
 198, 223, 279
 Filesi, Teobaldo, 73
 Firmiani, Mariapaola, 220
 Fisch, Max H., 15, 95
 Fodale, Salvatore, 38

- Franco, Luigi di, 61
 Fubini, Mario, 198
 Furnari, Antonello, 140
- Galasso, Giuseppe, 137, 151, 172, 229
 Garzya, Giacomo, 30
 Gaspardo, Pietro Giuseppe, 277
 Gatto, R., 44
 Gencarelli, Elvira, 147, 216
 Gerla, G., 44
 Giannantonio, Pompeo, 125
 Giarrizzo, Giuseppe, 257
 Ginzburg, Carlo, xvi, 26
 Gossman, Lionel, 249
 Gouhier, Henri, 127
 Gradilone, Alfredo, 124
 Grafton, Anthony, xv, 263
 Grant, Edward, 18
 Grassi Fiorentino, Silvia, 11
 Gray, Richard, 73, 74, 76, 77
 Grillo, Enzo, 214
 Gross, Hanns, 24, 218
 Grout, Donald, 90, 154, 155, 235
 Gutierrez, D., 270
- Haddock, B.A., 254
 Harris, Ellen T., 135, 142
 Hart, August C. 't, 207
 Hazard, Paul, 170, 198
 Heffernan, Thomas J., 284, 285
 Hersey, George, 21
 Hesse, Mary B., 283
 Huckle, Helmut, 305
 Hunter, Michael, 44
- Jacob, James R., 279
 Jacob, Margaret C., 126, 279
 Jessop, Thomas, 220
 Jonge, H.J. de, 182
 Joyce, James, xiii, 229
- Kamen, Henry, 116
 Kelley, Donald R., xix, 41
 Kimbell, David, 230, 236
 Klein, Jacob, 192
 Kors, Alan Charles, 29, 67, 310
 Kulstad, Mark A., 303
 Kunze, Donald, 240
- Labrouse, Elisabeth, 242
 Lachterman, David, 191, 192
 Lanza, Franco, 245
 Leppert, Richard, xvii
- Levine, Joseph M., 47, 223
 Levy, Evonne, 178
 Lilla, Mark, 206
 Liotta, Filippo, 198
 Longo, Mario, 57
 Lopez, Pasquale, 26, 148
- Magnaghi, Alberto, 80
 Manuel, Frank, 261
 Marino, John, 90, 110, 124
 Markstrom, Kurt, 230
 Marongiu, Antonio, 33
 Martani, Giuseppe, 276
 Martineau, Jane, 21
 Mastellone, Salvo, 2, 6
 Maugain, Gabriel, 272
 Mazzacane, Aldo, 15
 McClary, Susan, xvii
 MacMillan, Michael, 80
 Meikle, Robert, 230, 234
 Miccinelli, Clara, 269
 Middleton, W.E. Knowles, 16
 Minervini, Pantaleo, 213
 Momigliano, Arnaldo, xvii, 99, 286
 Monson, Dale, 305
 Mooney, Michael, 168, 181, 251
 Morelli, Giovanni, 140, 143, 144
 Morford, Mark, 248
 Mutini, Claudio, 28
- Nagel, Ivan, 237
 Nastasi, Pietro, 272
 Newman, Jane O., 86
 Niccoli, Ottavia, 78
 Nicolini, Fausto, xvii, 2, 42, 117, 183
 Nunnari, F.A., 80
 Nuzzo, Enrico, 102
- O'Donnell, James J., 182
 Osbat, Luciano, 29, 30, 42, 43
 Osler, Margaret J., 60
- Pagano, Roberto, 77, 112, 140, 141, 233
 Pagden, Anthony, 41, 172, 257
 Palladino, Franco, 43, 44
 Palmer, Lucia, 181
 Pardailh -Galabrun, Annik, xiv
 Passaro, Giuseppe, 130
 Patrides, C.A., 226
 Perez-Ramos, Antonio, 181
 Pesante, Maria Luisa, 211
 Petraccone, Claudia, 1, 13, 66
 Piaia, Gregorio, 57, 61, 291

- Pizzamiglio, Gilberto, 277
 Pompa, Leon, 181, 189, 240, 242
 Popkin, Richard H., 69, 107, 300, 301
 Quondam, Amedeo, 56, 101, 125
 Rabb, Theodore K., 31
 Rak, Michele, 2, 58, 61, 93, 201
 Redwood, John, 279
 Rice, Anne, 231
 Ricuperati, Giuseppe, 93, 97, 98, 108,
 117, 147, 148, 157, 170, 200, 201,
 213, 242, 277, 291, 296-298
 Rispoli, Guido, 93, 98
 Robinson, Michael, 89, 235
 Romano, Ruggiero, 32, 118
 Rosselli, John, 111, 231, 233
 Rossi, Paolo, 226, 246, 272, 301
 Russell-Wood, A.J.R., 73
 Saccenti, Mario, 56, 223
 Sallman, Jean-Michel, 228
 Santamaria, Nicola, 214
 Santoro, Marco, 270
 Santucci, Paola, 175
 Sayce, R.A., 278
 Scalabrella, Silvano, 15
 Scherillo, Michele, 207
 Schiffman, Zachary, 209
 Simonsuuri, Kirsti, 202
 Sina, Mario, 249
 Sontag, Susan, 144
 Spiller, Michael R.G., 57
 Spink, John, 60
 Sposato, Pasquale, 48, 218, 299
 Stephens, Walter E., 222
 Strazzullo, Franco, 263
 Strohm, Reinhard, 230
 Suppa, Silvio, 97
 Sutton, John L., 294
 Sweetman, J.E., 177
 Tagliacozzo, Giorgio, xix
 Thornton, John, 74
 Toffanin, Giuseppe, 99
 Tomlinson, Gary, 120
 Torrini, Maurizio, 15, 17, 54, 192
 Tuck, Richard, 17, 275
 Vaughan, Frederick, 246
 Venturi, Franco, xxi, 299
 Verba, Cynthia, 305
 Verene, Donald, 181, 274, 283
 Vigezzi, Brunello, 211
 Villapadierna, Isidora de, 73
 Vitolo, Antonio, 123
 Vitolo, Giovanni, 257
 Vittorio, Antonio di, 160
 Voitle, Robert, 175
 Walker, D.P., 57
 Waquet, Françoise, 13
 Westfall, Richard S., 214
 White, Hayden, 181
 Whitfield, Clovis, 21
 Williams, Hermine Weigel, 63
 Williams, Raymond, xvii
 Zagorin, Perez, 104
 Zambelli, Paola, 273, 291, 312
 Zangari, Domenico, 163
 Zapperi, Ada, 118